Push Me, Pull You:
Imaginative and Emotional Interaction in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art

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Push Me, Pull You

Imaginative and Emotional Interaction in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art

Volume One

Edited by

Sarah Blick and Laura D. Gelfand

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On the cover: *Well of Moses*, Chartreuse de Champmol, *c.* 1395–1406, detail of angel. Photo: author.

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These books are dedicated to the memory of our fathers,
Boris Blick and Sidney Gelfand.

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INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME 1

Scope and Focus of the Volumes

Cooperative interaction is key to the mobility of the Pushmi-pullyu, the fictive creature from which these volumes take their name. In Hugh Lofting's Dr. Doolittle books, the Pushmi-pullyu is described as an antelope with two heads at opposite ends of its body. In order to do anything at all both of the animal's heads must engage in a dialogue and come to a decision. The interdependent nature of this decision making as well as the suggestion of physical and emotional engagement evoked by the animal's name seemed to the editors to nicely reflect our goals in compiling the essays published here.

All devotional objects are designed for some type of interaction with devotees; this interaction can be physical, intellectual, and/or emotional. Artists, patrons, and institutions had a vested interest in producing works of art that inspired those who used them. Given the overwhelmingly interactive nature of devotional art it was something of a challenge for the editors to narrow the scope of these volumes and we did so by including only essays in which devotional interactivity was central to the authors' methodological approach. The objects discussed in these books required specific responses or actions and the essays elucidate the layered relationships that were established between devotional objects and those who interacted with them.

The editors believe that there are three distinct categories into which devotional interaction can be divided: active physical interaction, purely imaginative interaction, and performative interaction. An example of active physical interaction would be a pilgrim who, while visiting a church, would walk around, under, and through the sculpture and architecture of the building containing the sacred goal of his travels. The same individual also had the option of taking an imaginative pilgrimage in which he or she could stay home and use a manuscript to inspire a mental pilgrimage and the emotional response associated with physically visiting a pilgrimage site. Performative pilgrimage could play a role in both active and imaginative pilgrimages, i.e., walking the labyrinth in pilgrimage church or turning the pages of a devotional book in order to facilitate imagined momentum. In all three types of experiences, the pilgrim physically manipulates an

object or is manipulated by an imaginative story or the physical space of the pilgrimage church. In every example the purpose of these active and imaginative pilgrimages was to achieve salvation.

All large projects must be limited in scope and the essays gathered here focus on European devotional objects from *c.* 1300 to *c.* 1500, created on both sides of the Alps, finding pan-European commonalities in the history of response. Medieval and Renaissance audiences differed significantly from those that preceded and followed them. Fewer individuals typically interacted with earlier devotional objects and these were generally people with training or experience in appropriate responses. During the later medieval period greater numbers of lay individuals came into contact with devotional objects and these volumes examine the responses of these people to show how fourteenth and fifteenth-century viewers experienced these objects in new and divergent ways. The personalization of these responses was dramatically curtailed by the church as part of their reaction to the Reformation beginning in the mid-sixteenth century. Later devotional art exhibits uniformity and the imprimatur of church authority that sometimes limited unique interactions. We see the artwork created in the periods and places covered in these volumes as discrete within its temporal boundaries, yet unlimited in the variety of possible responses.

Reception Theory

Many scholars have examined the notion that the viewer was meant to interact viscerally with devotional works of art, and reception theory (*Rezeptionsgeschichte*) has been used particularly successfully in many recent studies. According to reception theory the "viewer" (or reader) should not be seen as a single individual, but rather a composite of imagined, intended, explicit, implicit, ideal, actual, and archerecipient viewers. This multivalent "viewer" affects how the artwork was commissioned, designed, implemented, and received. This approach allows for a layered understanding of the complexity involved in looking, communicating, and understanding the messages various objects conveyed to their contemporary audiences. Reception theory also cautions the art historian to be aware that they bring their own preconceptions to the work of art they analyze.[1] Studies using this theory

[1] Madeline Caviness, "Reception of Images by Medieval Viewers," in *A Companion to Medieval Art*, ed. Conrad Rudolph (London: Blackwell, 2006), pp. 65–85.

emphasize understanding a variety of readers' or viewers' intentions and that multiple interpretations occurred at the same time or over the course of the centuries.

Beyond this, scholars such as David Freedberg in the *Power of Images* and John Shearman in *Only Connect: Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance*,[2] have examined how artwork went beyond basic seeing and brought about intense emotional and physical responses thus engaging the spectator in a profound way. It is in this vein that this volume seeks to explore more specific instances of the demanding art and architecture of the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

Interaction and Devotion

Produced in the context of a centuries-old artistic tradition of Christian art, artists, patrons, and viewers looked for interactions with artwork that reflected new ideas of emotional connection and theatrical presence. Indeed late Medieval and Renaissance art was surprisingly pushy. Its architecture demanded that people move through certain passages; its sculptures played elaborate games alternating between concealment and revelation; and its paintings charged viewers with moving visually through two dimensions, recreating long and imaginative journeys. Viewers of this period were meant to push back, interacting with artwork in a performative manner in order to gain insight into religious belief and their own reactions to these demanding works of art. Seeing so many of these objects removed from their original surroundings and placed in the secular context of a museum has promoted the idea that these precious objects were simply looked at, but not touched, fondled, or kissed. However, medieval devotees demanded a physical and imaginative relationship with art, and artists and architects designed their work with this in mind.

Senses and Perception

Implicit in the study of interaction and objects are medieval concepts of the senses and vision and medieval perception has been the focus

[2] David Freedberg, *The Power of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991) and John Shearman, *Only Connect…Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (Washington, D.C.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

of much scholarly attention. This is particularly relevant to interactive art and architecture because artists and patrons had these ideas in mind when creating monuments that were intended to touch people's hearts and minds. Certain senses were continually appealed to in order to make these objects and the experience of them more effective. For example, hearing was the focus of earthenware sound vases that were embedded into walls of churches in an attempt to improve acoustics.[3] This kind of innovation was prompted by the notion that sound was important because it was comprehended not only by the ear but also by the "inner sense of the soul."[4] Sound was seen as a form of harmony, interacting with other sounds and our hearing, but also with movement, and this harmonic movement was reflected in the mathematical movement of celestial objects such as planets.

Smell also factored into the animation of the worship experience, as in the example of herbs and fragrant flowers picked that morning by congregants who carried them in procession on the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin.[5] The official reason for the good-smelling produce was to recall the fragrance said to have lingered in the Virgin's empty tomb, but they were also used for magical purposes.[6] Barking Abbey scattered different flowers in sequence on Pentecost[7] and frankincense and "pepper" were used to scent the parish churches at Bramley, Hampshire and Stoke Charity, respectively.[8]

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[3] Following Roman theories of acoustics in theaters, the vases reduced reverberation in closed rooms. The vases absorb some of the sound energy and then it radiates the sound at the resonance frequency. They were inserted into the walls and covered with a wooden peg, typically they flanked window opening and adorned the curves of ceilings.

[4] Johannes Scotus Erigina, *De divisione naturae*, *PL* 122, *c.* 965 as cited in Władysław Tatarkiewicz, J. Harrell, Cyril Barrett, D. Petsch, *History of Aesthetics*, ed. C. Barrett (The Hague, Mouton, 1970–74), pp. 124–26, esp. p. 126.

[5] They were then blessed in the church and were used to protect barns, houses, people, livestock, and prevent bad weather. They were also placed in fields, behind cattle stalls, and thrown into hearth fires. They were also used as medicine for sick cattle, placed in the beds of infants, and slipped under pillows to keep witches away. R.W. Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1987), pp. 32–33.

[6] Scribner, p. 33.

[7] Anne Bagnall Yardley, *Performing Piety: Musical Culture in Medieval English Nunneries* (New York: Palgrave, 2006), p. 71.

[8] Simon Roffey, "Devotional Objects and Cultural Context: The Medieval Parish Church" in (ed.) Virginia Raguin, *Catholic Collecting: Catholic Reflection 1538–1850, Objects as a Measure of Reflection on a Catholic Past and the Construction of Recusant Identity in England and America* (Worcester, MA: College of the Holy Cross, 2006), p. 26 according to their churchwardens' accounts.

Other blessings were transmitted through touch, as seen in the practice of placing objects under the altar while the Mass was celebrated, granting them a healing power. The altar cloth and corporal were also believed to have the power to heal when touched to the afflicted, especially epileptics. Priests placed the corporal on the faces of the congregation and they would dip their fingers in the water and wine in the chalice and then stroke the eyes and mouths of children and old women to protect them from evil.[9]

While other senses were clearly involved, sight was the sense most often at the heart of interactive devotional practices. The actual experience of seeing was considered interactive as many people believed that an object under observation emitted a light that was perceived by the viewer, who returned the visual ray to the object.[10] Sight was especially prized for its role in revealing truths: St. John of Damascus (*c.* 676–749) wrote that "…the word appeals to the hearing, the image appeals to sight; it conveys understanding…the image was devised to guide us to knowledge and to make manifest and open what is hidden, certainly for our profit and well-doing and salvation…"[11] Theologian Thomas Bradwardine (*c.* 1290–1349) focused on images, noting that either real or inspired by words, they should be vivid in order to impress themselves on the memory of the worshiper.[12] Prayers were written with close-up views in mind, noting different details, asking viewers to add details not seen, stretching their imagination, but also relying on the realism portrayed in the image.[13] Artists responded to this intensity by making evident things and even abstract concepts that were previously hidden from view. For example, in the high and later Middle Ages, body-part reliquaries that once hid their sacred contents behind glittering metal, now displayed "the Real Presence" through rock

[9] Scribner, p. 36; A. Franz, *Die Messe im deutschen Mittelalter* (Freiburg, 1902), pp. 87–92, 96–97, 107–13.

[10] David Chidester, *Word and Light: Seeing, Hearing, and Religious Discourse* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), pp. 1–24.

[11] Richard Marks, *Image and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2004), p. 17; A. Louth (transl.), *St. John of Damascus, Three Treatises on the Divine Images* (New York, 2003), p. 29.

[12] Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 281–88, esp. 284.

[13] Hans Belting, *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages: Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion*, translated by Mark Bartusis and Raymond Meyer (New Rochelle, NY: Aristide D. Caratzas Publisher, 1990), p. 62.

crystal.[14] Painters and sculptors, too, sought to make clear what was once meant to be only imagined, as seen in images of the pregnant Virgin and St. Elizabeth on whose stomachs were shown the fetuses of Christ and John the Baptist (in appropriate un-fetus-like stances).[15]

Of course, beyond actual sensual perception lay a wish to also experience things that could only be understood through faith: to see the inner realities of our bafflingly physical world and to achieve intimacy with the divine without mediation.[16] Development of these senses helped one detect hidden meanings, beauty, and invisible truths and most theological accounts subdivided the physical from the spiritual senses.[17] But sometimes people liked to be tricked, to be struck with awe at the angels who appeared to sing from the façade of Wells Cathedral (actually choir boys standing on platforms behind the statues) or when jugglers used illusion to make viewers think that their heads had been cut off and placed on a platter in an allusion to John the Baptist.[18]

Imaginative Interaction

The later Middle Ages and the Renaissance ushered in a new era of imaginative interaction. Increased prosperity helped boost literacy, creating a greater demand for devotional works written in both Latin

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[14] Marie-Madeline Gauthier, *Highways of the Faith: Relics and Reliquaries from Jerusalem to Compostela*, trans. J.A. Underwood (Seacaucus, NJ: The Wellfleet Press, 1983), pp. 128–130. See, for example, *The Visitation*, *c*. 1310, attrib. Master Heinrich of Constance, Germany, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Icon of the Virgin with Child in a Reliquary Frame*, 1350, Siena, Italy, attrib. to Naddo Ceccarelli in The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, and *Reliquary of Charlemagne's Forearm*, 1481, Germany, in Aachen Cathedral Treasury.

[15] See, for example. *The Pregnant Virgin at the Spindle*, Bohemia, *c*. 1390 in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldgalerie and *Visitation of Mary and Elizabeth*, Passau, Germany, *c*. 1410, in the Germanisches National-museum, Nuremberg, and the Visitation.

[16] Karl Rahner, "The Doctrine of the 'Spiritual Senses' in the Middle Ages," in *Theological Investigations: Experience of the Spirit, Source of Theology*, trans. David Morland, vol. 16 (New York: Crossroad, 1983), pp. 104–34.

[17] Margaret R. Miles, "Vision: The Eye of the Body and the Eye of the Mind in Augustine's *De Trinitate* and Other Works, *Journal of Religion* (April 1983), pp. 125–42; Ann W. Astell, *Eating Beauty: The Eucharist and the Spiritual Arts of the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 4.

[18] Bruno Roy, "The Household Encyclopedia as Magic Kit: Medieval Popular Interest in Pranks and Illusions," *Journal of Popular Culture* vol. 14 (1980), pp. 60–69, esp. 63–64. Reginald Scot, *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) in (ed.) John Rodker (Bungay, 1930), p. 198.

and the vernacular among members of the middle and upper classes.[19] These texts allowed a new kind of intellectual engagement with the written word, in support of and in addition to the Latin prayer.[20] This led to a concordant demand for images because images created a different kind of engagement than reading.[21] Attention was desired, not just habitual listening, but "actual attention" filled with feeling directed toward the divine.[22] The laity were not seen as passive receptacles, but rather functioned as an engine for innovation and the desire for devotional interaction helped create new shrines, new plays, new books, and even giving to charity in new ways.[23]

These new images were designed for interaction in a number of ways. Some were linked to memory, as discussed in the work of Frances Yates and Mary Carruthers.[24] In particular readers were encouraged to create an architectural template in their minds. Within this interior they were to place striking figural images that would remind them of the subjects they wished to recall. Once created, this architectural template was able to function as the backdrop for any number of memory subjects because it had become a thoroughly developed and detailed structure that existed independently of the objects and figures layered upon it. David Summers has written that, "The art of memory thus came to consist of visualizable places, in which mental images were formed and arranged, like a wax writing tablet with letters written on it.

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[19] Rev. Robert A. Horsfield, "The Pomander of Prayer: Aspects of Late Medieval English Carthusian Spirituality and its Lay Audience" in (ed.) Michael G. Sargent, *De Cella in Speculum: Religious and Secular Life and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1989), p. 208.

[20] Katherine Zieman, *Singing the New Song: Literacy and Liturgy in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 110–11, 116. Even rote Latin prayers were not worthless but part of one's identity as a worshiper saying sacred words, helping them engage in affective piety, p. 121.

[21] Kathleen Kamerick, *Popular Piety and Art in the Late Middle Ages: Image Worship and Idolatry in England 1350–1500* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), p. 192.

[22] Zieman, *Singing the New Song*, pp. 125–126; Jean Gerson, *Oevres complètes* (ed.) Mgr. Glorieux (Paris: Desclée, 1961), vol. 2, p. 184. Gerson uses an example of asking a peasant to recite the Lord's Prayer without letting his mind wander. He finds that the peasant cannot and this serves as an illustration that prayer needs to have a concrete focus, *ibid.*, vol. 2, pp. 184–85.

[23] Natalie Zemon Davis, "Some Tasks and Themes in the Study of Popular Religion" in *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion* (eds.) Charles Trinkaus and Heiko A. Oberman (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974), p. 309.

[24] Frances A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966); Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (op. cit. n. 12); Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought; Meditation, rhetoric and the making of images 400–1200* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1998).

But what was imagined was not just a wax writing tablet, it was also a painting."[25] Peter Parshall found that, "the link between images and memory was seen to be essential and indissoluble. Both religious pictures and meditational texts were deemed occasions for rumination and reminiscence, beginning with a seminal clue and unfolding in stages of reflection that were understood to elaborate and expound on a central idea."[26] These ideas are predicated on the notion of an attentive reader/viewer thinking, remembering, and classifying.

This is especially true when picturing was linked with the intensity of devotion and understanding. For example, Bishop William Durandus (1237–1296) emphasized that picturing in all its senses (*pictura*) was more potent than *scriptura* (writing in all its senses) as "*pictura* seems to move the mind more than *scriptura* does."[27] Michael Clanchy also translated it as "A picture is seen to move the feelings (*animum*) more than writing does." Here Durandus focuses on *animus* meaning "mind, spirit, heart, soul, feeling, and passion." He felt that the picture allows us to witness the event versus just hearing about it (in writing).[28] Therefore, "in church we do not show as much reverence for books as we do for images and pictures."[29]

Affective Piety & Images & Imagination

Legends in which images miraculously come to life are embedded in Christian history but in the later Middle Ages the new affective piety ushered in a new role for the image, helping the devout understand the spiritual world by using their own direct sensory experiences.[30] Of course, writing also stirs the imagination, but belief, such as

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[25] David Summers, *The Judgment of Sense; Renaissance Naturalism and the Rise of Aesthetics* (Cambridge, Cambridge Univ. Press, 1987), p. 39.

[26] Peter Parshall, "The Art of Memory and the Passion," *Art Bulletin* 81/3 (1999), p. 466.

[27] (Eds.) A. Davril and T.M. Thibodeau, *Guillelmi Duranti Rationale divinorum officorum* in *Corpus Christianorum, continuatio medievalis* 140 (1995), vol. I, iii, 4 (36); Michael Clanchy, "Images of Ladies with Prayer Books: What do they Signify?" in (ed.) R.N. Swanson, *The Church and the Book* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2004), p. 114.

[28] Clanchy, "Images of Ladies with Prayer Books,", p. 114.

[29] Clanchy, pp. 114–15; (Eds.) A. Davril and T.M. Thibodeau, *Guillelmi Duranti*, vol. I, iii, 4 (36).

[30] Belting, *The Image and Its Public*, p. 7.

Durandus's, in the ability of images to bring the viewer into a scene more directly helps to explain the popularity of imagery. Additionally, images could be interpreted in a variety of ways, whereas writing was more limited in scope. And imagery was not regulated as closely as texts were in the later Middle Ages allowing for greater incorporation of feeling and imagination.[31]

Reciprocity

Within the home certain images were used to inspire devotion. Successful prayer was not said without appropriately contemplative emotional thought. By contemplating images while praying it was believed that the devotee could achieve the proper emotional state that would create a form of reciprocity between the devotee and the individual holy personage depicted, or an "exchange of gazes."[32] Numerous accounts survive that tell of visual interaction with images,[33] even though the gaze from an image could also spell danger. For instance, pictures of the Last Supper commonly had the head of Judas turned away lest his malevolence harm the viewer. The inversion of this gaze was based on the notion that vision is initiated by the object, not the viewer, as stated by Roger Bacon (d. 1292), who believed the object "sends its visible qualities through the intervening air to the observer's eye."[34]

Visions & Mysticism

Images of Grace, or *Gnadenbilder*, were pictures inspired by visions and visions inspired by images—seeing spiritually what the eyes had seen before.[35] Margery Kempe (*c.* 1373–after 1438) distinguished between seeing images "in her mind" or with her "spiritual eye" versus

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[31] Clanchy, "Images of Ladies with Prayer Books," p. 115.

[32] Belting, *The Image and Its Public*, p. 57; A. Neumeyer, *Der Blick aus dem Bilde* (Berlin, 1964), p. 29 ff. This is similar to the Hindu notion of *darhsan*.

[33] Belting, p. 57.

[34] Margaret R. Miles, *Images as Insight: Visual Understanding in Western Christianity and Secular Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), p. 97; David C. Lindberg, *Science in the Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. 340.

[35] Scribner, p. xxvi.

seeing with a "bodily eye."[36] Jean Gerson (1363–1429), acknowledged that images, while useful, could lead the thoughts to bodily and sensible things and thus should be used with caution, "…we ought thus to learn how to proceed with our mind from these things to the invisible ones…For this is the purpose of images."[37] Savonarola (1452–1498) emphasized that private images should be simple and of little material value, but that they should be used to inspire meditation.[38] Ironically, such mystical practices actually caused the production of more images and images that were more realistic and more communicative than ever before.[39] Images could both teach and inspire. Early on, St. Aelred of Rievaulx (1110–1167) encouraged a novice to meditate on an image of the youthful Christ: "…when this sweet image of this sweet Boy appears before the eyes of your heart, when you paint this most lovely face with, as it were, a spiritual imagination…"[40] He also spoke of "the soul as a house where the mental images are painted on the walls."[41] Some were suspicious of physical images and encouraged the attainment of abstract meditation, as St. Bernard (1090–1153) famously stated "…you have not reached very far unless you can, by the purity of the mind, raise yourself above the phantasms of corporeal likeness rushing in from every direction."[42] Heinrich Suso (1295–1366), as much as he cherished images for their sensual and imaginative qualities, also spoke in favor of leaving them behind.[43] Nonetheless, it was difficult to eschew images altogether as their power was great. Indeed, there are numerous accounts of physical images inspiring visions.[44] Art was

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[36] Marks, *Image and Devotion*, p. 17; (eds.) S.B. Meech and H.E. Allen, *The Book of Margery Kempe* (Early English Texts Series, original series 212, 1940, reprinted 1997).

[37] Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting* (Abo: Abo Akademi, 1965), p. 20; Jean Gerson, *Opera monia* (Stasbourg, 1514), leaf 71M.

[38] Ringbom, p. 20; G. Gruyer, *Les illustrations des écrits de Jérome Savonarole et les paroles des Savonarole sur l'art* (Paris, 1879), p. 197, n. 1, 204.

[39] Hans Belting, *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages: Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion*, transl. by Mark Bartusis and Raymond Meyer (New Rochelle, NY: Aristide D. Caratzas Publisher, 1990), p. 58.

[40] Ringbom, p. 16; Aelred of Rievaulx, *Tractatus de Jesu puero duodenni* in *Oeuvres completes de Saint Bernard*, 1–7 (Paris, 1865–67), vol. 6, p. 369 ff.

[41] Ringbom, *Ibid.*

[42] Ringbom, *Ibid.*

[43] Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative*, p. 17.

[44] Millard Meiss, *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), p. 107 tells of an example from a later story of St. Katherine.

considered the first step on the ladder to devotion and mystical guides recommended that the devotee begin with an actual image, then produce an inner image, and then exclude all visual imagery to contemplate the formless God within the soul, attaining a mystical union.[45] Visions (inspired by these images) increase in number, allowing the devotee to experience the miraculous directly.[46] Seeing was central to devotional practice called "salvific display" (*heilbringende Schau*). A.L. Meyer has described three types of seeing:[47] "mystical seeing," which is a vision created by intense meditation; "seeing of the mysteries," or seeing with ones' actual eyes, a visible sacred (miraculous) beyond the ordinary reality; and "purely bodily seeing," in which the viewer sees the image directly with the eye, with efficacy and power in the act of viewing alone.[48]

Contents of the Imaginative Volume

The essays included in this volume examine the many ways and means by which medieval devotees experienced images and objects and the emotional experiences they hoped to have. The objects discussed by these authors range across a wide variety of media while the desired results of interactions with them are more consistent. The overriding concern of late medieval and Renaissance individuals was the salvation of their souls and those of their ancestors and heirs. Objects and actions were primarily centered on the means by which prayers could be made most efficacious, gifts might bring the greatest spiritual rewards, pilgrimages could earn the greatest number of indulgences, and a host of other actions and anticipated benefits. As the essays in this volume show, the imagination was a fertile place in which interpretation, visualization, emotional engagement and all manner of devotional thought could be actively engaged.

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[45] Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, pp. 410–11. See J. Stelzenberger, *Die Mystik des Joh. Gerson* (Breslau, 1928), p. 71 ff; H.S. Denifle, *Die deutschen Mystiker des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Fribourg, 1951); H. Grundmann, *Religiöse Bewegungen im Mittelalter*, 2nd ed. (Darmstadt, 1961).

[46] Belting, p. 412.

[47] A.L. Meyer, "Die heilbringende Schau in Sitte und Kult" in *Heilige Überlieferung Feschrift für I. Herwegen* (Münster, 1938), pp. 235–36.

[48] Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk*, p. 4; A.L. Meyer, "Die heilbringende Schau in Sitte und Kult" in *Heilige Überlieferung Feschrift für I. Herwegen* (Münster, 1938), pp. 235–36.

Shifting Perspectives: Text, Image and Interaction

This section includes essays that investigate some of the new textual sources developed and produced during the medieval period. Books are essentially interactive as they call for their readers to turn the pages, thus acting as the engine for their progression. The self-driven nature of books served as an open invitation for experimentation and this, combined with the increase in literacy and prosperity resulted in numerous new and experimental designs. Many of these are designed to encourage multivalent readings of individual images and to inspire new ways of interacting. Robert Clark and Pam Sheingorn's essay examines strategies employed in three different illustrated manuscripts of Guillaume de Digulleville's *Pelerinage Jhesucrist*. The authors find that the texts and images engage the reader, encouraging them to interpret the texts beyond their literal meanings, but in spiritual, moral and even mystical ways. Elizabeth Monroe examines the *Hortus deliacarum*, an Alsatian manuscript from the latter half of the 12th century. This unusual compendium of texts, diagrams, musical notation, and illuminations, and other things, demands of its readers the ability to move back and forth between experiences, understanding and knowledge. The ways in which the book was intended to be read, and more importantly, experienced by its readers are investigated in this essay. Anne Rudloff Stanton studies how the narrative marginal illumination sequences in several early, fourteenth-century, English devotional texts were illuminated and organized. She argues that the small size of the images forces an intimate connection with the reader while the organization acts as an engine driving the reader through the text while imparting additional information and helping the reader make important connections. The juxtapositions created by these marginal illuminations create their own narrative structure that adds another level of forward thrust or momentum to the experience of perusing the book. Margaret Goehring analyzes the ways in which the elaborate borders in the Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal functioned in order to engage the viewer at various levels including mnemonic, emblematic and didactic. Devotional books are seen to be not only interactive on a somatic level, but they invited a variety of other multivalent responses. Erika Boeckler examines a little-known architectural alphabet describing places in which it intersects with actual physical architectural structures. The ways in which viewers read and experienced letterforms and buildings is explored and contextualized. Through this

analysis it becomes apparent that what and how we read are far more layered and meaningful than is typically thought.

Imagined Pilgrimage and Spiritual Tourism

In addition to actual pilgrimage and virtual pilgrimage, many medieval devotees engaged in imaginary pilgrimage in which they remained in one place but used devotional aids in order to imagine efficacious voyages to holy sites. Such pilgrimages were believed to be as effective at earning indulgences for the pilgrim as actual or virtual pilgrimages and a tremendous number of late medieval devotional accessories were developed to facilitate these mental voyages. Henry Luttikhuizen examines two Netherlandish paintings to flesh out how they functioned as devices to stimulate imaginative pilgrimages. The author emphasizes the importance of the pure and devoted heart in the devotional process. Through this examination the depicted hagiography of St. Lucy is seen as a paradigm for the devotee who used the painting as a means of embarking on an imaginative pilgrimage. Megan Foster-Campbell looks at two typical accessories of medieval devotional practices—books of hours and pilgrims badges—that were brought together in over sixty books in order to see how their combination led to a more nuanced and satisfying devotional experience for their owners. When pilgrims' badges were included in books of hours, either by being sewn in, painted illusionistically, or a combination of both, the book's owner was able to use the hybrid devotional object as a passport to an imaginative pilgrimage experience that would be potentially more efficacious because of these tools. The mnemonic aspects of these badges when included in texts intended for daily devotions is an important aspect of the study.

Indulgences and Interactivity

Indulgences were an important part of the economy of salvation that developed during the twelfth century and grew in the preceding centuries.[49] Owners of images and devotees in churches and other places anxiously collected and tallied the indulgences they earned. Importantly,

[49] Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory* (Chicago, University of Chicago, 1984).

indulgences are not a forgiveness for sin, rather they forgive the punishment that is due for a sin and that would otherwise be purged by fire in Purgatory. Completing a pilgrimage to an important site like the Holy Land, Rome or Santiago de Compostela carried with it the promise of a clean slate, i.e., a plenary indulgence. Those returning from such voyages were assured that after death, like the saints they so admired, they would be admitted to heaven straightaway. Partial indulgences were less valuable but more easily earned and could be gained by saying prayers, donating to a church or any number of other activities. Because partial and plenary indulgences acted as such a successful motivation for pilgrims and devotees across Europe they played a fundamental role in the economy of salvation. The essays in this section each describe ways in which indulgences were earned and used by devotees and the church, Walter Gibson's essay contributes to our understanding of how indulgences in general, and indulgenced prints actually worked. Gibson identifies and examines the way in which indulgenced prints functioned. The meaning of these objects and the economy of salvation that produced them is also explored. Amy Morris studies the ways in which indulgenced altarpieces were used. Thanks to inscriptions, viewers of the paintings were told how to perform and how many indulgences they would earn through their actions. Churches benefited from the charitable activities associated with these and other donations, and participants earned indulgences that would shorten time in purgatorial torment following their deaths. Susan Ward examines an English alabaster narrative showing the Mass of St Gregory and analyzes how the composition creates an interactive experience for the viewer allowing him or her to see Christ and to be pulled toward his miraculous apparition in a uniquely personal and powerful way.

Performativity and Empathic Devotional Practice

Theater played an important role in medieval society, one that is only now beginning to be understood by historians of art. It influenced the iconography and presentation of sacred images and spaces as well as conditioning audiences in the proper responses. Theater was not the only performance familiar to the laity since the Mass was a performance itself. Most crucially, the elevation of the host became the centerpiece for the churchgoer. Changes in late medieval and Renaissance

doctrinal practice, however, made this more inaccessible so artists were called upon to create visual alternatives; the essays in this section explore aspects of this phenomenon. Donna Sadler examines the emotional power encoded within the design, execution and placement of the Moses Well by Claus Sluter at the Chartreuse de Champmol. In particular, she allows us to see the monument through the same emotional lens as the monatery's original Carthusian residents. Mark Trowbridge studies Hugo van der Goes's *Vienna Diptych*, examining how the artist used the figure of Mary Magdalen in the *Lamentation* side to draw these two iconographically disparate panels together. Firmly connecting Hugo within the *rederijkerkamers* in Ghent, the author investigates the impact of performances by these groups on the artist's work. Kristen Van Ausdall investigates the ways in which the powerful desire by devotees to see the host was satisfied by a number of iconographic themes. Visual art was an intrinsic element in making the host seem more real and it complimented the monstrances and other liturgical elements that showcased the host. Juan Luis González García's essay looks at a number of important Renaissance manuscripts and paintings owned by Isabella the Catholic, Charles V and Philip II to elucidate how these were used as stimuli for devotion. Mnemonic techniques and other perceptual processes are found to play a key role in the author's interpretation.

Reflections in Mirrors, Walls and Interstices

This section contains essays that examine how artists promoted interactive reflection and devotion using a variety of spaces. Mirrors have long been the subject of theological discourse in terms of reflecting the world, God's purpose and our role in it, but they have also been used as symbols of vanity and selfishness. These incongruous meanings created a rich field in which artists could play with ambiguity to create spaces of contemplation, reaction and interaction. Walls were used to protect and define but they also serve as penetrable barriers through which a community could mark itself and establish its identity. The interstices between the two panels of a diptych establish the relationship between the pendants. Alexa Sand looks at Parisian mirror cases, examining the symbolic and metaphorical meanings held by mirrors in the Middle Ages. These mirror cases have been connected to the literature of courtly romance, but the author argues for

an expanded and more nuanced understanding of how they operated within a devotional context. Scott Montgomery analyzes the ways in which medieval city walls were associated with the patron saints of those cities. Together the power of the relics and the stones contained and defined a city, serving to protect the inhabitants. City gates performed as liminal spaces in which this security was both ruptured and reinforced and the images of saints that decorated these openings served to reinforce the strength of the gates, the walls and the sense of community both felt and expressed by the urban community. Al Acres focuses on the ways in which artists attempted to add meaning to the gaps between the panels of hinged diptychs. Successful strategies were those that involved the viewer in contemplation of the narratives that they opened "like a book" each time they were engaged in devotions with the paintings. The paintings feature gaps that are inherent in their construction, and that open up avenues for ambiguity and contemplation.

PART I

SHIFTING PERSPECTIVES: TEXT, IMAGE, AND INTERACTION

1. ENCOUNTERING A DREAM-VISION: VISUAL AND VERBAL GLOSSES TO GUILLAUME DE DIGULLEVILLE'S *PELERINAGE JHESUCRIST*

Robert L.A. Clark and Pamela Sheingorn

We tend to think of the experience of reading as unidirectional transmission from author to reader rather than an interactive exchange, but, as this paper will demonstrate, the reception of a medieval text could involve complex interactions between reader and manuscript. The text might acquire glosses, that is, quotations from authorities to bolster its points or comment on it, and these glosses then might accompany some exemplars of the text as it circulated. When instantiated in a specific manuscript, decisions about page design in general, and the location of the glosses with respect to the text in particular, would manipulate the reader's experience, as would illustrations offering visual interpretation and commentary. The reader-viewer might then interact with this complex artifact in a variety of ways, including making insertions in the margin such as the word nota to call attention to specific passages, thereby changing the experience of a future reader-viewer of the manuscript. If the manuscript were read aloud, either by an individual reader for herself or in a context of shared reading, or prelection, the reader might pause over an illustration or a gloss. A gloss might perhaps be read aloud, and the work referenced in the gloss might itself be commented upon or remembered through reading or meditation. The multivocality of a glossed manuscript could thus actively come into to play. Finally, the exemplar itself might be copied, in the process of which every aspect of the instantiated text was subject to change, whether deliberate or inadvertent. We explore all of these possibilities in this study of three manuscript copies of the same poem.

The third of Guillaume de Digulleville's widely read pilgrimage poems, the *Pelerinage Jesucrist* (hereafter *PJC*) presents a "life of Christ," and thus a familiar narrative scarcely in need of commentary.[1]

[1] All three poems have been edited by J.J. Stürzinger: *Le Pèlerinage de vie humaine, de Guillaume de Deguileville*, Roxburghe Club 124 (London: Nichols, 1893); *Le*

But it also offers a highly original interpretation of that life in the form of a dream vision narrated in the first person and populated by a number of allegorical personifications who interact with Biblical characters.[2] His poem is filled with vivid verbal images and constructed almost entirely out of dialogue—lively speeches into which scripture and exegesis are artfully woven. Further, Guillaume not only relates his dream vision, but also interprets it for his readers. The resulting poem provides access to the bodily experience of presence at the events as well as directing the reader's emotional responses, intellectual ponderings, and devotional meditations.

Written in 1358, this poem of circa 11,400 lines survives in about thirty manuscripts, eighteen of which are illustrated. This paper focuses on three of the illustrated manuscripts, unusual for their inclusion of extensive Latin glosses that, so far as we know, remain entirely unexamined in the scholarly literature. The earliest of these manuscripts, BnF fr. 14976, is unusual in containing only the *PJC*. Two other illustrated and glossed manuscripts, both in Brussels today, contain all three of the pilgrimage poems in the sequence of their composition, so that the *PJC* follows the *Pelerinage de vie humaine* and the *Pelerinage de l'ame*.[3]

We begin by exploring likely reader response to the complex presentation of texts and images in BnF fr. 14976, dated *c*. 1375–80.[4] The

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Pèlerinage de l'âme, Roxburghe Club 127 (London: Nichols, 1895); and *Le Pèlerinage de Jésus-Christ*, Roxburghe Club 133 (London: Nichols, 1897). For a recent collection of essays that aims to "mieux situer Guillaume de Digulleville comme auteur majeur dans la production allégorique narrative du XIV^{e} siècle," see Frédéric Duval and Fabienne Pomel, editors, *Guillaume de Digulleville: les 'Pèlerinages' allégoriques* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2008), here p. 15.

[2] For a literary study of the *PJC*, see Maureen B. Boulton, "Digulleville's Pèlerinage de Jésus Christ: A Poem of Courtly Devotion," in *The Vernacular Spirit: Essays on Medieval Religious Literature*, eds. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski, Duncan Robertson, and Nancy Bradley Warren (New York: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 125–144.

[3] Any study of illustrated manuscripts of Guillaume's poems must start with the basic work done by Michael Camille in his Cambridge dissertation, to which we gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness. Michael Camille, *The Illustrated Manuscripts of Guillaume de Digulleville's 'Pèlerinages', 1330–1426*, 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., Cambridge University, 1984).

[4] This paper is part of an ongoing collaborative project on illustrated manuscripts of the *PJC*. See Robert L.A. Clark and Pamela Sheingorn, "Performative Reading: Experiencing through the Poet's Body in Guillaume de Digulleville's *Pèlerinage de Jhesucrist*," in *Cultural Performances in Medieval France: Essays in Honor of Nancy Freeman Regalado*, eds. Eglal Doss-Quinby, Roberta L. Krueger, and E. Jane Burns (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2007), pp. 135–151. Pamela Sheingorn, "Performing the Illustrated Manuscript: Great Reckonings in Little Books," in *Visualizing Medieval*

page design of this manuscript is unlike that of other *PJC* manuscripts that we have studied. (fig. 1.1, fol. 1r) It features ruling in two columns: a wider, inner column for the poem's text, with rubrics for the title of the poem and the names of speakers. Large red initials signal the poem's internal divisions, and smaller initials are separated from the rest of each line by a space, here ruled, as is typical for French poetry. The somewhat narrower outer column is reserved for Latin glosses—at least 436 of them—and twenty-two grisaille miniatures. Because both glosses and miniatures sit beside the text, they do not literally interrupt its flow, yet their insistent presence on the page demands attention. (fig. 1.2, fols. 1v–2r) The roughly square miniatures respect the ruling and usually align with an initial or a speech call. They thus give the visual impression of close coordination with the text, while the glosses have a much more ad hoc quality. They are in more than one hand and some may have been added after the completion of the manuscript. On occasion, as on folio 2r, the presence of a miniature seems to have forced a gloss into the inner margin, that is, the placement of miniatures seems to have had precedence over the placement of glosses. The result is a set of tensions the reader-viewer must negotiate. How, we want to ask, do these various textual and visual elements share the space of the page? And, more importantly, how might reader-viewers of this manuscript have interacted with, how were they pushed and pulled by, these various textual and visual elements?

A tension among these different elements is signaled from the very beginning. (fig. 1.1) There, two lines of Latin summarize the subject of the poem, Christ's sojourn on earth understood as a pilgrimage.[5] Immediately below follows the rubricated French title, "Le pelerinage ihesucrist," as well as the four-line historiated initial "E." Staff and scrip identify the figure in the initial as a pilgrim, and the cross-halo specifies that he is Christ. Thus, the reader-viewer must negotiate Latin, French, and an image before reading a line of the poem. Furthermore, one can easily imagine the reader-viewer's eyes simply following the column of text down to the bottom of the page and discovering that the text in

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Performance: Perspectives, Histories, Contexts, ed. Elina Gertsman (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 57–82; Robert L.A. Clark and Pamela Sheingorn, "Were Guillaume de Digulleville's *Pèlerinages* Plays? The Case for Arras 845 as Performative Anthology," *European Medieval Drama* 12 (2008), pp. 109–147.

[5] Cum Christus dominus fuit in terra peregrinus / Intentus finis prodesse fuit peregrinus.

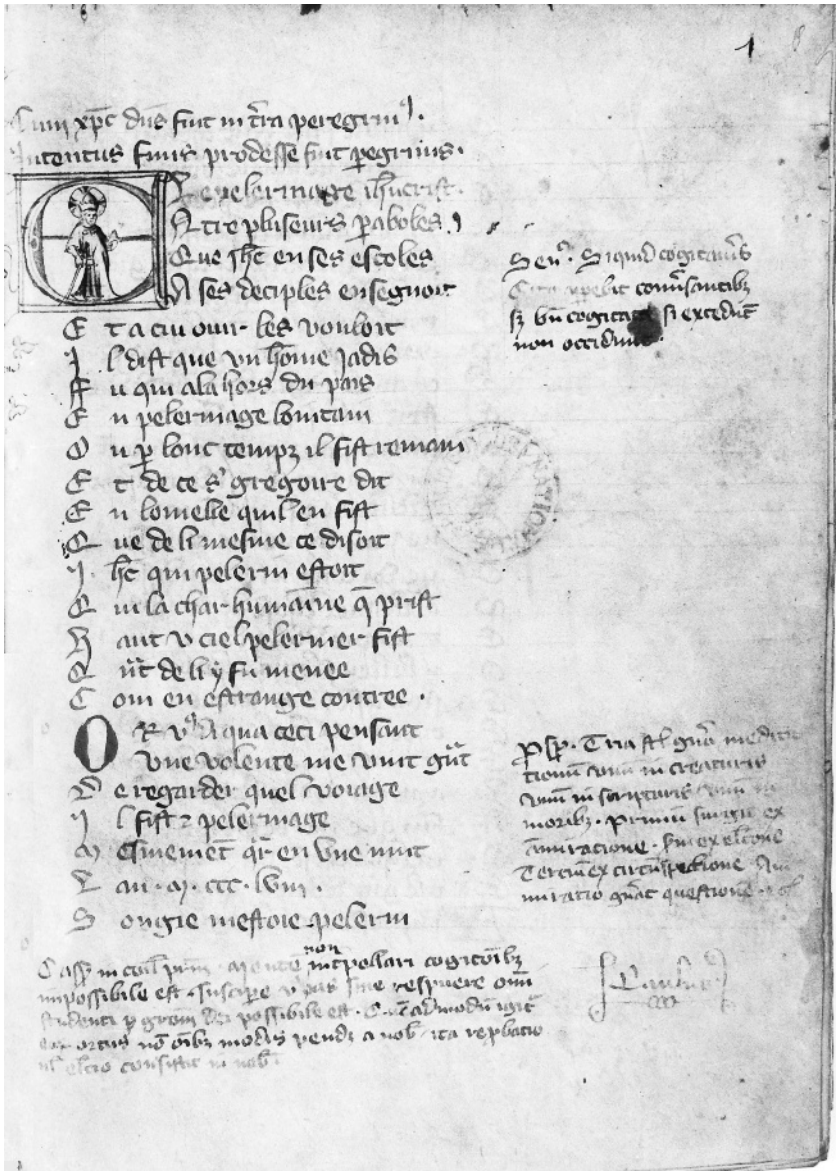

Fig. 1.1 BnF fr. 14976, fol. 1r. Opening folio, with initial of Jesus as Pilgrim and three glosses. Photo: Bibliothèque nationale de France.

the wide lower margin below the ruling for the poem is not in French verse but heavily abbreviated Latin! The three glosses on folio 1 recto visually frame, even surround, the text of the poem, actively competing for the reader-viewer's attention. Thus, from the very first folio the manuscript's apparatus seeks to inflect the reader's perception in ways that do not occur in an un-glossed and un-illustrated manuscript.

The glosses in fr. 14976 cite of a range of authorities, beginning with Seneca, Hugh of Saint Victor, and John Cassian on the opening folio. The disparate nature of these authorities might at first seem surprising, but the quotations from Seneca and Cassian were, in all likelihood, culled from the same source: the *Manipulus florum* of Thomas of Hibernia, a popular florilegium compiled in Paris around 1306.[6] According to Chris L. Nighman's website devoted to the *Manipulus florum*, thanks to which we discovered this work as the probable source for many of the glosses in fr. 19476, Thomas's text survives in nearly 200 manuscripts and 48 printings dated from 1483 to 1887. It was an especially convenient source for authors or glossators seeking authoritative quotes, as it contains approximately 6000 quotations from classical, patristic, and medieval authors grouped into 266 alphabetically arranged topics. Thus, the opening quotation, itself from a collection of Seneca's proverbs, occurs under the topic "Cogitacio" in the *Manipulus*. Guillaume's poem opens with one of Jesus' parables about a man who left his homeland to go on a long pilgrimage. In the lines that follow, the poet himself glosses this allusion by citing one of Gregory's homilies, to which is added the marginal gloss. The text is thus doubly glossed, once by the author and, subsequently, by the glossator, whose quotation from Seneca contains a commonplace about how the mind will be able to recall what it ponders thoroughly.[7] The opening gloss thus urges a thoughtful approach to the *PJC*, presumably so that the reader will remember its new understanding of the central truths of the redemption of humankind presented through an allegorizing dream-vision.

The second gloss in the outer margin of fol. 1r comes from Hugh of Saint Victor's *De meditatione*. It occurs next to the first section of text after the opening that is marked by a capital letter. In this passage,

[6] See http://info.wlu.ca/~wwwhist/faculty/cnighman.

[7] Si quid cogitaveris cito apparebit conversantibus sed bene cogitata si excedunt non occident.

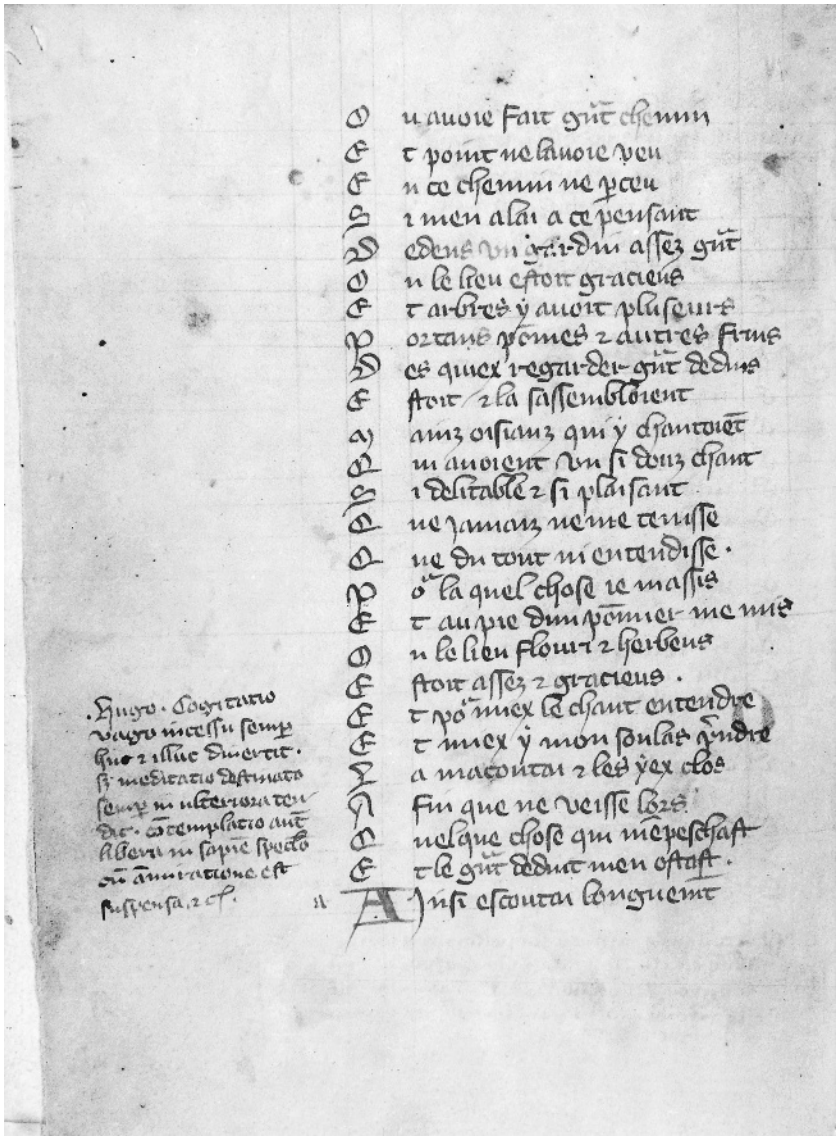

Fig. 1.2a

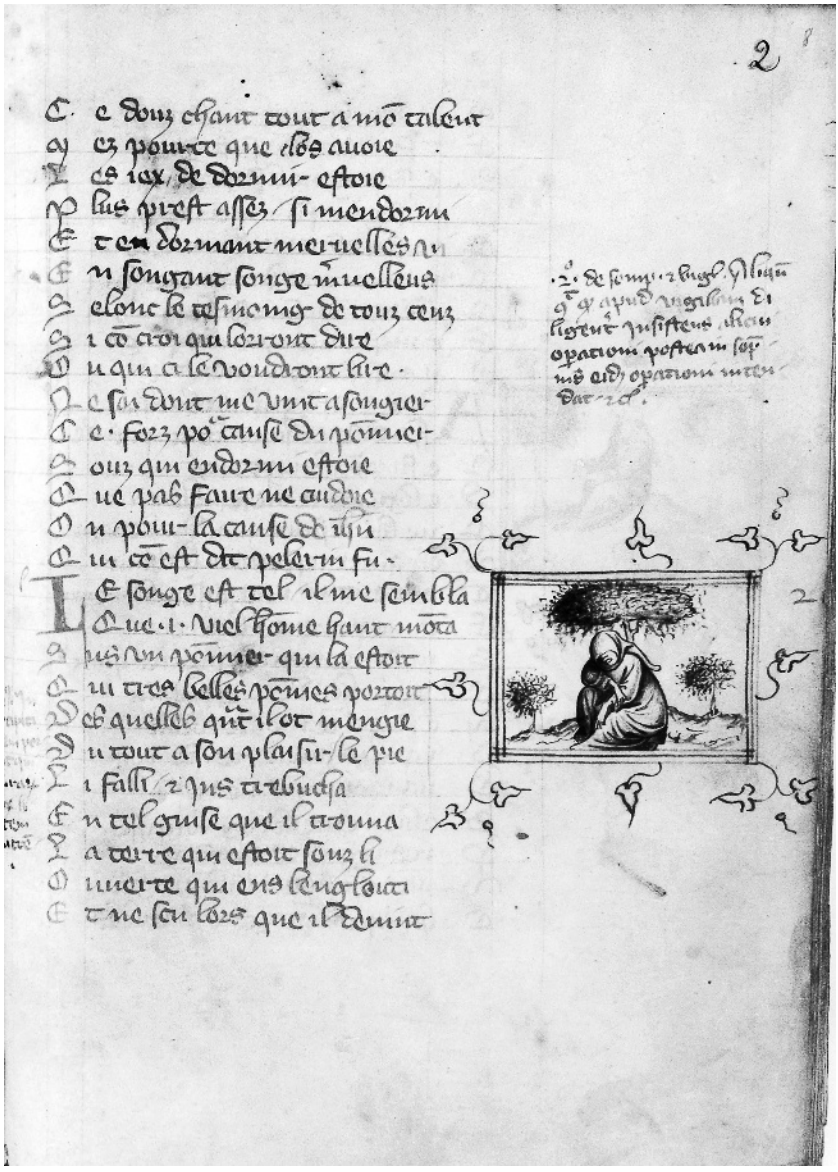

Fig. 1.2b

Fig. 1.2 BnF fr. 14976, fols 1v–2r. Poet-Dreamer Asleep (right). Photo: Bibliothèque nationale de France.

the poet speaks about his reflection on the parable and his desire to *see* (a key word in the *PJC*) the pilgrimage of which Jesus spoke. The gloss, which derives from the opening of Hugh's text, defines three types of meditation: on the created world, on scripture, and on custom. According to Hugh, each type derives from a particular mode of perception: wonder, reading, and observation. The inclusion of a gloss from a text on meditation by an authority noted for his mystical writings is highly suggestive as to what type of approach the creators of this glossed text wished to instill in its reader-viewers. There is, however, a problem here in that the gloss presents a misreading of the original text, with the result that "admiracione" in the source becomes "animi racione" in the gloss; and "ex lectione" becomes "in electione." It should be noted that the two Brussels manuscripts share this erroneous reading of the source.[8] Since some of the glosses are shorter in fr. 14976 than in the later Brussels manuscripts, it cannot be their direct source. But the Brussels manuscripts introduce almost no glosses not found in fr. 14976, so the most plausible conclusion is that all three go back to a common source.

The gloss in the lower margin of fol. 1r, from John Cassian, also figures in the *Manipulus*. As with the gloss from Seneca, it is under the heading "Cogitacio." It speaks to the ability of the mind, aided by the grace of God, to accept or reject the reflections that it receives. Its placement here is certainly significant in that it occurs immediately below the beginning of Guillaume's dream vision. Guillaume himself had been anxious that his vision, although instigated by his reading of the *Roman de la Rose*, not be mistaken in its inspiration nor its intentions with Jean de Meun's part of the poem. Cassian's insistence that God's grace allows one to distinguish between true and false visions serves to authenticate Guillaume's vision, guaranteeing its authority for readers as they embark on the allegorical journey that follows.

We may draw a number of tentative conclusions from these initial glosses. Certainly, the "scholarly" aspect of this apparatus is limited in scope. The creators of the manuscript clearly did not go back to original sources, and they certainly did not expect their readers to do so either. Rather, the glosses inflect reader response through the citation

[8] Only one of the manuscripts, Brussels, Br 10176–78, renders the final sentence of the gloss correctly as "Admiracio generat questionem." BnF fr. 14976 and Brussels, Br 10197–8 both repeat the misreading 'Anima racione,' the latter manuscript spelling the word "anima" in full.

of key figures of the mystical tradition, inviting a meditative approach to Guillaume's allegory. As reader-viewers negotiate their way through Guillaume's highly idiosyncratic treatment of the life of Christ, the glosses provide an aura of authority and perhaps necessary assurance as to its theological orthodoxy.

The twenty-two miniatures in fr. 14976 assist the reader-viewer in a different kind of work, that of visualizing the literal level of the poem. Here again, though, one may have the impression that a push and pull exists among the manuscript's constituent elements, specifically between the images and the Latin glosses that share its outer margin. Reader-viewers—whether modern or medieval—somewhat familiar with other manuscripts of the *PJC*, might have noticed that fr. 14976 is unusual in that there is no liminal image of the sleeping poet. The space where such an image might normally have occurred is instead occupied by two glosses that have the perhaps unintended effect of displacing the image of the sleeping, dreaming poet. We have argued elsewhere that such a liminal image in other manuscripts signals the authenticity of Guillaume's dream vision, but in fr. 19476 it appears that the glosses have usurped this authorizing function, at least on its opening folio. Let us now try to understand how image and gloss may have worked together to inflect the reader-viewer's reception of the text.

A sequence of three miniatures in the *PJC*'s first 200 lines encourages the reader-viewer to experience Christ's pilgrimage through the body of the poet-dreamer. Shortly after the poem opens, the first-person narrator falls asleep in his bed and dreams he is in a garden, seated under an apple tree and listening to the singing of birds. The narrator describes how he rested his head and closed his eyes so that nothing could interfere with his pleasure. The gloss, opposite this passage on fol. 1v, is again a quotation from Hugh of Saint Victor, this time from *De arca mistica,* but borrowed in all likelihood from the section of the *Manipulus* on "Contemplatio." The gloss speaks to the superior nature of contemplation, which is suspended in wonder in a mirror of wisdom, as opposed to thought, which wanders here and there.[9] The gloss is particularly well chosen, for here the poet falls asleep within his

[9] Cogitatio vago incessu semper huc et illuc divertit. Sed meditatio destinata semper in ulteriora tendit. Contemplacio autem [est] libera in sapiencie speculo com amiracione suspensa etc.

dream. He is now at a double remove from his waking state and thus his mind is freed to fix itself on the vision that will unfold before him. The gloss on the following folio, from a text entitled "De sompno et vigilia," gives a scholastic and scientific grounding to the very unusual dream vision that will ensue.[10] Only after these glosses on contemplation and dreaming do we encounter the first miniature representing the poet-dreamer in an image that quite literally renders the environment and bodily posture described in the text. Both glosses and miniature serve to "illuminate" the text, but the glosses seem to serve a kind of pre-emptive function with regard to the miniature by pointing to the proper way of understanding the narrator's dream and the sleeping figure in the miniature.

In the next section of the poem, signaled by a capital L, the narrator dreams that he sees an old man fall from the apple tree and be swallowed up by the earth. He does not yet know how to interpret what he sees. Nor, perhaps does the reader, but in the inner margin, a gloss from Gregory's *Moralia in Job*, from the section of the *Manipulus* devoted to "Presumptio," suggests that he should go beyond the literal to seek a moral understanding of the scene. (fig. 3, fols. 2v–3r) After witnessing Adam's fall, in the next miniature the narrator is carried by birds to a high place from which he can view the world. The poem's enumeration of all that the poet can see from this height calls forth the next gloss from John Chrysostom—via the section on "Prelatio" in the *Manipulus*—which begins: 'No one can stand in a valley and speak from a mountain.'[11] The miniatures and glosses are thus called forth by key words or passages from the text, but while the images give a more literal rendering, the glosses consistently work to orient the reader toward a mystical understanding of what is described. The images thus work to represent an embodied experience while the glosses underscore that this experience is occurring on another plane. It should be noted, however, that the senses are not being rejected here; rather, through proper interpretation, they are directed to a higher, contemplative plane.

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[10] Aliquando quot quod apud vigiliam diligenter insistens alicui operationi postea in sompnis eidem operationi intendat etc. We have not been able to determine whether this is from a Latin translation of the scientific treatise by Aristotle or from the text by Albertus Magnus which bears the same title.

[11] Nemo potest in valle stare et de monte loqui; ubi stas inde loquere aut bene loqueris ibi sta. Si in terra est, animus tuus ut quid de cello loqueris etc.

The dreamer now eavesdrops on angels above him conversing about the fall of Adam with the result that he desperately wants to see Adam's angel reporting back to God. In spite of the extremely bright light that forces him to shield his eyes, he is able to see the concentric circles of heaven, which are rendered in the miniature on folio 4v. The text passage contains an exceptionally dense cluster of forms of the verb *veoir*—five uses in ten lines. Perhaps this rhetorical exuberance, combined with the already noted central importance of sight, resulted in the gloss from Saint Bernard's *Sermons on the Song of Songs* that speaks to faith's capacity to reach the unreachable, know the unknowable, etc. Once again, the gloss serves to authorize Guillaume's dream as an authentic, mystical vision best approached through meditation.

In profusely illustrated manuscripts of this poem, the miniatures return to the poet's body—and therefore his perspective—from time to time, but the remaining 19 miniatures of fr. 14976 show the unusual sights he sees rather than him seeing.[12] Almost all are of subjects so unusual, especially in a life of Christ, that they may well appear for the first time in this manuscript. What is the function of these miniatures? Certainly, the idiosyncratic subjects of the miniatures make it easy for the reader-viewer to lodge them in memory, where they will enable recall of unfamiliar episodes in the poem. For example, Guillaume incorporated Bernard of Clairvaux's allegory of the Daughters of God debating the fate of humankind into his poem, where it functions as a cosmic frame. The Italian author of the *Meditationes vitae Christi* did so at about the same time, but regardless of who was first, this material was still quite unfamiliar in this context. Miniatures of the allegorical figures of Justice, Truth, and Mercy on folio 7r (fig. 1.4) and of Mercy despondent over the eternal damnation of Adam's lineage on folio 10v help the reader-viewer to fix in memory the long theological debates Guillaume composed for these characters. Embodiment is still at work here but, as with many of the glosses, the miniatures representing the Daughters of God serve to pull the reader-viewer's attention toward the theological underpinning of the poem. The reappearance of the Daughters towards the end of the poem, kneeling before God enthroned in the miniature on folio 208v, correlates with their verbal

[12] For discussion of visual programs that emphasize the poet's body, see the authors' articles, cited in note 4 above, on Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, ms. 1130, and Arras, Bibliothèque municipale, ms. 845.

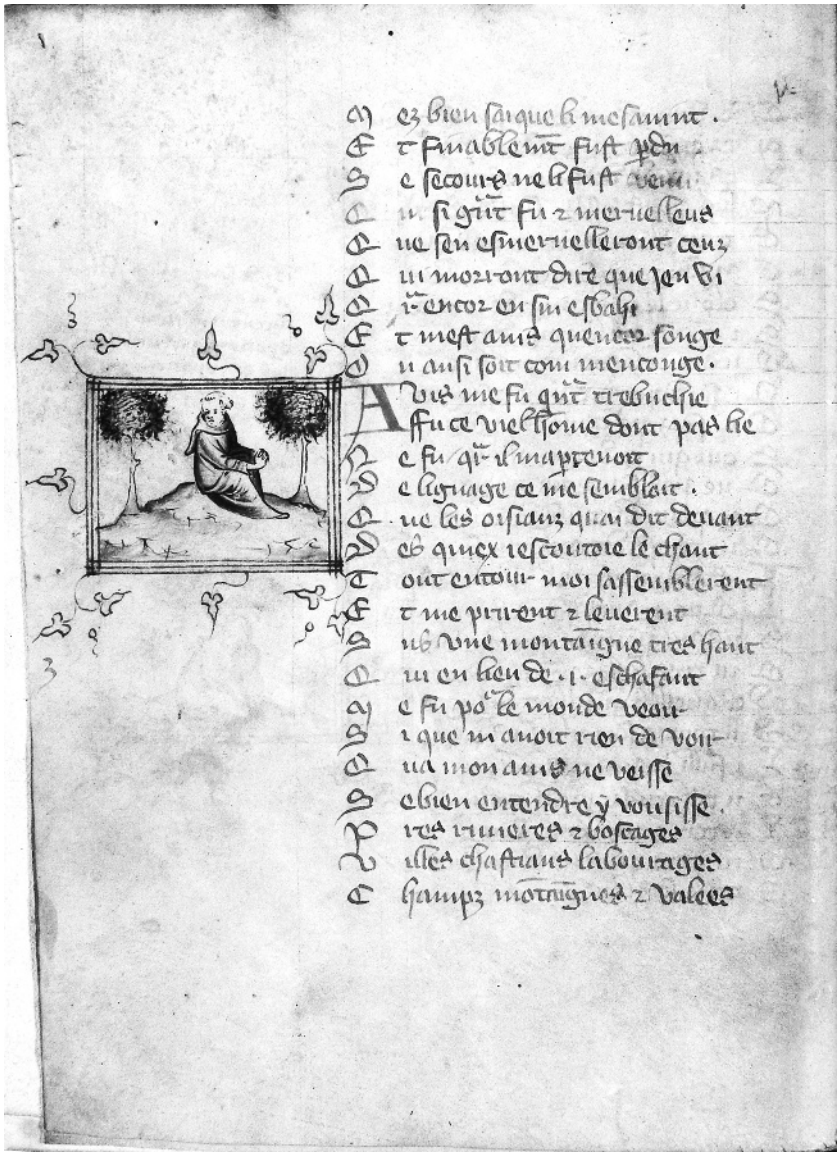

Fig. 1.3a

Fig. 1.3 BnF fr. 14976, fols. 2v–3r. Poet-Dreamer seated on hilltop (left). Photo: Bibliothèque nationale de France.

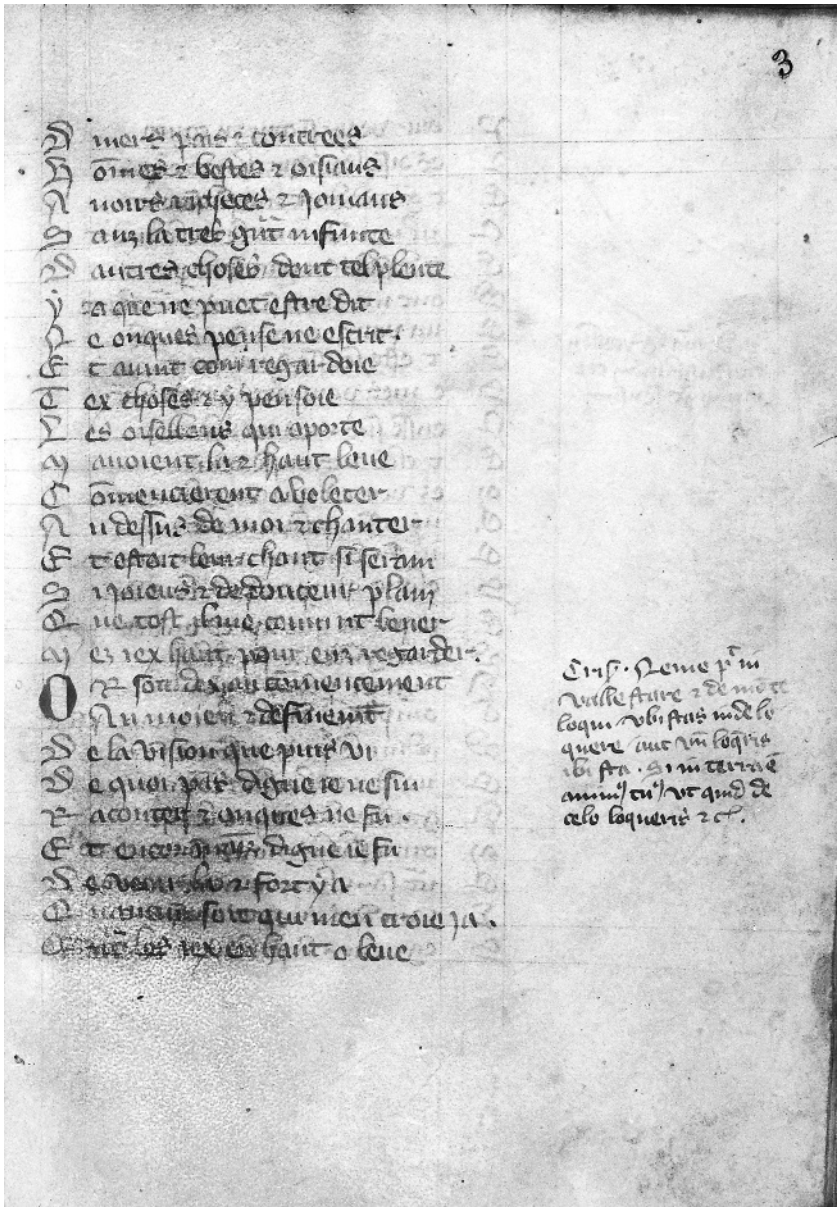

Fig. 1.3b

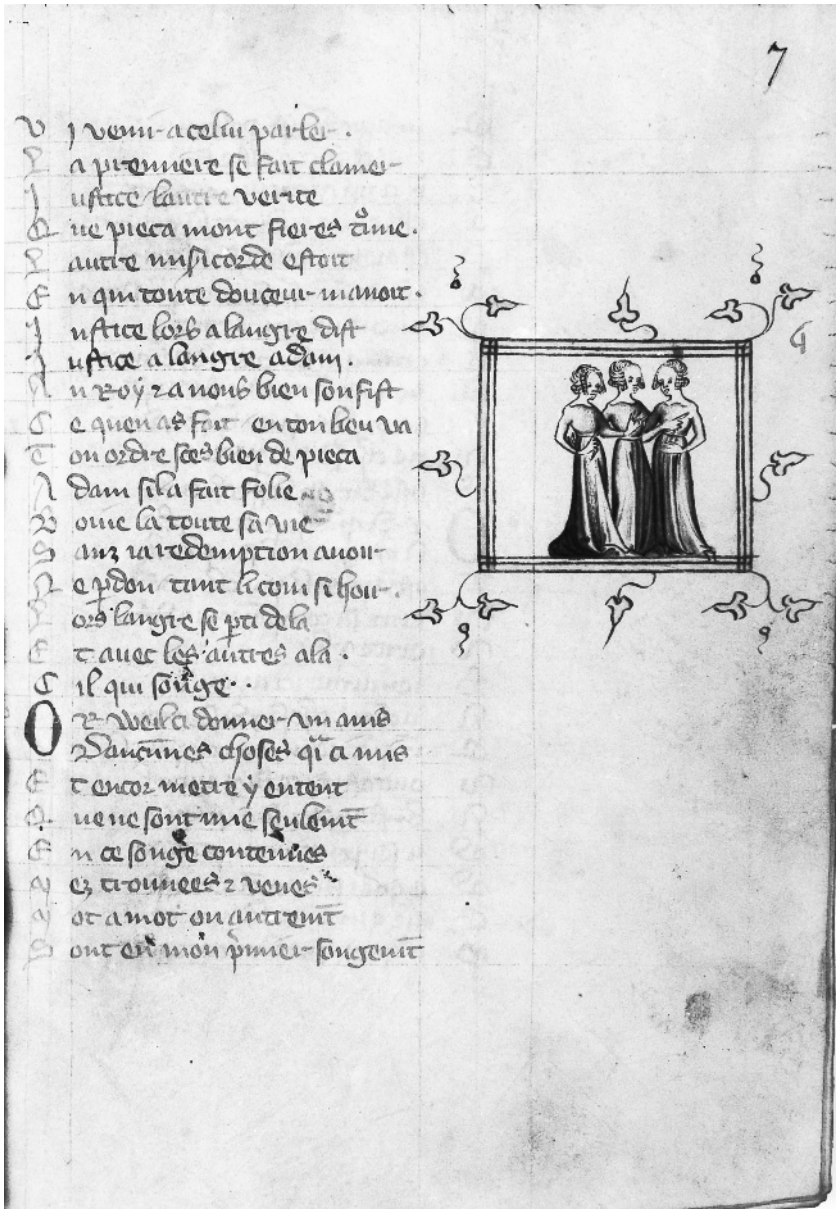

Fig. 1.4 BnF fr. 14976, fol 7r. Justice, Truth, and Mercy. Photo: Bibliothèque nationale de France.

acceptance of the theological necessity of Christ's sacrifice as payment for Adam's fall, which puts an end to their disagreement. This final miniature brings the visual program of fr. 14976 to a satisfying conclusion. In the poem, the death and Assumption of the Virgin are still to come, but the designer of the manuscript did not call for visualization of these familiar subjects.

The remaining miniatures in fr. 14976 continue to visualize Guillaume's invented scenes of disputation, or his allegorical figures, or both, and they also emphasize another of his innovations, an emphasis on the still rather neglected Joseph. Surprisingly, this part of the manuscript contains none of the standard scenes one might expect in a life of Christ. There are no miniatures for the Annunciation, Nativity, Adoration of the Shepherds, or Gifts of the Magi, episodes that are all witnessed, described, and expounded upon by the poet-dreamer. Rather, as Michael Camille observed, the scenes selected for the visual program are unfamiliar. For example, the poet stages the angel Gabriel's response to Joseph's doubts about Mary not as a dream scene, but as a dialogue. The miniature on folio 35v visualizes the scene as an interactive encounter between a resistant Joseph and a forceful Gabriel which is grounded in Scripture by the gloss from Matthew 1.[13] And a new allegorical figure, the personification of Poverty, observes Mary and Joseph's need for shelter and offers them lodging in a place that belongs to her, the stable in Bethlehem. This offer evokes one of the narrator's direct addresses to characters in his poem, here the Virgin Mary, in which he first tells her how inappropriate this offer is when she should have an imperial palace and then acknowledges that she will accept the offer because she wishes to imitate her son's humility. Glosses from Seneca, Job, Genesis, and Boethius function effectively as documentation. For example, the poet-dreamer states, "All were born to labor and to endure pain for their bread, and if there is nobility in anyone, it arises from the heart."[14] Each part of this sentence is glossed: by Job ("Man was born to labor"); Genesis ("In the sweat of your brow you will earn your bread"); and Boethius ("Nobilitas sola est qui animi moribus ornate"). The miniature on folio 39v, (fig. 1.5) placed between

[13] The gloss reads: Mt 1. Antequam convenirent inventa est in utero habens de spiritu sancto. (Before they came together, she was found with child, of the Holy Ghost. Mt. 1.18).

[14] Touz furent nés pour labourer / Et pour leur pain painne endurer. / Et s'en aucun est noblece, / Seulement du cuer se drece (ll. 1911–14).

Fig. 1.5 BnF fr. 14976, fol. 39v. Poverty Makes a Bed for Mary. Photo: Bibliothèque nationale de France.

the end of this speech and the resumption of narration, suggests that "all" may in fact be the poor: it is Poverty who labors to make a bed for Mary from the straw in the stable. Once again, we see how the choices of the visual program may inflect the reception of the text through the specificity that comes with embodiment.

After the Nativity yet another allegorical character, an old woman personifying Nature, appears in protest. (fig. 1.6, fol. 40v) She argues that no woman can give birth without her knowledge of it. Because the theology of the Incarnation had developed in an atmosphere of controversy, the poet had ample material to draw on and could use it to construct lively debates. He has Joseph respond to Nature by expounding at length on the mystery of the Incarnation, employing the analogy of the sun taking color from painted glass. But there is also a response in the margin of 41v. The painted glass analogy is glossed with a passage from John Chrysostom, borrowed from the section of the *Manipulus* on the Incarnation, about the impossibility of understanding this great mystery.[15] Although the implication is that the Incarnation requires a mystical understanding, this gloss almost seems to undercut the earnestness of Joseph's explanation. Saint Augustine is also cited and, as the gloss itself indicates, this citation is itself a gloss on Romans 11.24.[16] There is thus a sort of *mise en abyme* at work here, with competing voices both within the text and without. This layering of voices may be indicative of a certain anxiety over containing Nature's complaint against Mary's miraculous conception and perhaps a concern that the arguments Guillaume has Joseph voice, although based in theological and mystical authority, might somehow not suffice. The impression of an intertextual layering of voices is reinforced by the double citation within a few folios of the same passage from Ambrose's *De fide ad Gratianum* to the effect that questioning the "supernal mysteries" is not to be allowed. The first time this passage occurs, it is in a gloss attributed to Gregory; only the second time is it attributed to Ambrose. This is not unusual in that citations of the Fathers circulated freely, especially once they were removed from their original context.

[15] Scio que verbum caro factum est; sed quomodo factum est nescio; mirans que nescio, omnis creatura ignorat.

[16] Glosa Ro. 11. Deus conditor nature nichil contra naturam facit. Tamen non incongrue aliquid dicitur facere contra naturam qui fac contra id quod novimus in natura (God, the creator of nature, does nothing contrary to nature. for whatever is done by him who appoints all natural order and measure and proportion must be natural in every case).

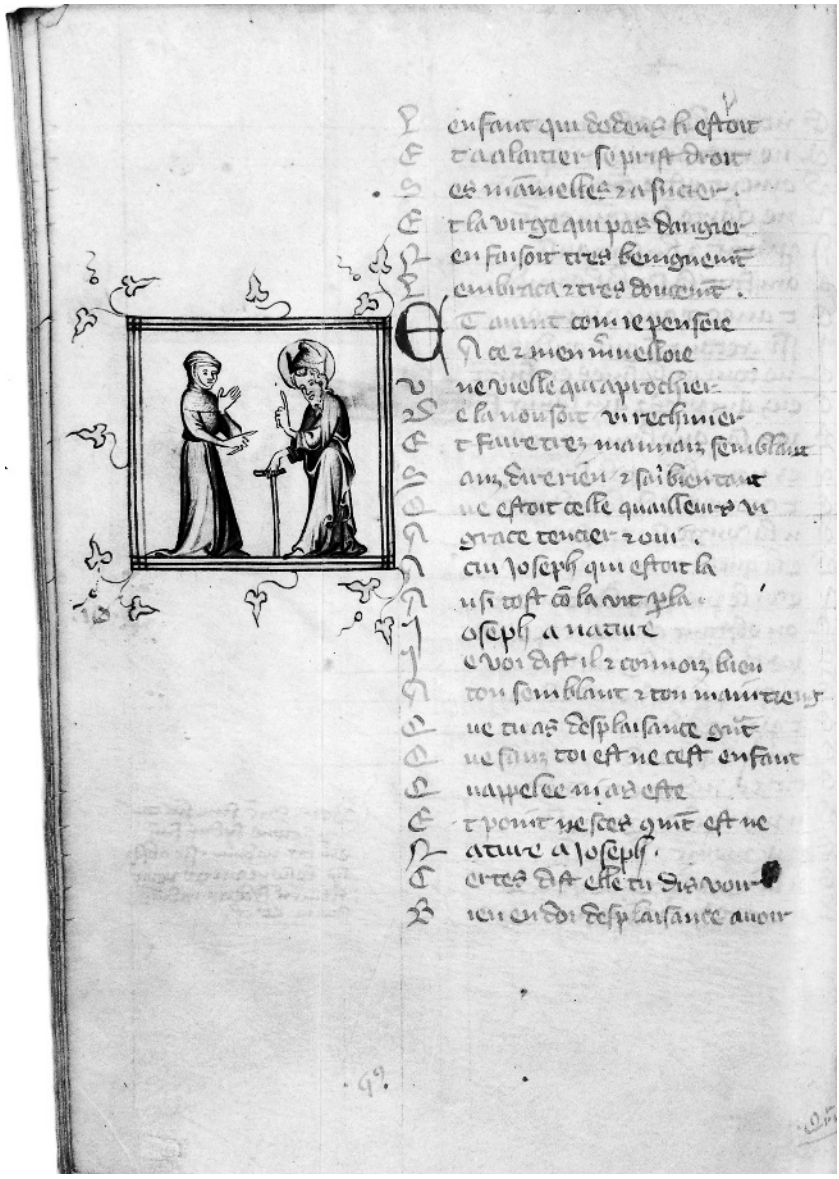

Fig. 1.6 BnF fr. 14976, fol. 40v. Nature and Joseph Converse.
Photo: Bibliothèque nationale de France.

The double citation from Ambrose is, however, ironic in that its message about the inappropriateness of discussing the mysteries of the faith occurs during just such a discussion. Once again—and although the effect was likely unintentional—the authority of the gloss seems to undercut the authority of the text it is glossing.

The Virgin and Child are visualized for the first time in an image on folio 43v that reinforces their dire poverty by representing Guillaume's personification of Poverty again, who this time gives Mary scraps of cloth in which to wrap her child. Next to the passage on folio 44r in which the poet-dreamer says he saw Mary take the clothing, wrap Jesus, and put him in a manger, a gloss from a gospel commentary by Anselm emphasizes that Christ's poverty characterized his entire life: when he came into the world he had no place to lay his head, and dying he had nothing to cover his nudity.[17] This gloss also hovers over the miniature below it, as if offering an explanation for the fact that Joseph sits moping as Gabriel offers him consolation and advice. Not having the knowledge that Jesus chose poverty as the condition of his life on earth, he worries that the stable is "shameful and appalling, and at this time of year it is much too cold."[18] In this instance, both the gloss and image, perhaps unintentionally, work together to reinforce the theological argument of Guillaume's text.

The personification of Old Law soon enters with her tablets and circumcision knife, which she promptly uses to circumcise Jesus "lourdement et rudement" (clumsily and roughly). But the shock of this act is softened by the gloss from Bernard right next to it: "For this reason he wanted to be circumcised, so that he might show [himself to be] the author of the Old Law just as also of the Gospel."[19] The designers of

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[17] Anselmus in epistola. Christus ita pauper fuit ut veniens in mundum non in sua sed in aliena domo nasceretur et natus propter inopiam loci in presepium brutorum animalium poneretur. Et vivens in mundo non haberet ubi caput reclinaret / nec moriens unde nuditatem suam tegeret / nec mortuus unde involveretur etc. (Anselm, On the Gospel. Christ thus was poor so that coming into the world he was born not into his own but into another's household, and having been born, on account of want of a place he was put in the manger of beasts. And living in the world, he did not have a place where he might lay his head, nor dying, anything with which he might cover his nudity, nor dead, anything in which his body might be wrapped.…)

[18] …honteus et lait / Et en ce tempz trop grant froit fait (ll. 2185–86).

[19] Ber(nardus). Propterea voluit circumcidi ut ostenderet auctorem veteris legis sicut et evangelii; 48v opp. ll. 2393–97. For Bernard's text, see *In octava epiphaniae.* 804 Sermo. *De circumcisione, baptismo, et verbo Domini ad Joannem. "Sic decet nos implere omnem justitiam"* (Matth. III, 15.), *PL* 183, col. 153b.

later manuscripts chose to illustrate this scene, but here the miniature of Old Law alone, below her name in the gloss on folio 48v, functions, as do the illustrations of Poverty, as a memory image for interpretation at the allegorical level.

Our last example from fr. 14976 centers on an episode that Guillaume inserted just before Jesus' baptism. (fig. 1.7, fol. 95v) In the presence of John the Baptist, Jesus stages a confrontation between Old Law, now so weak, according to the text, that she is on crutches as well as blind, and New Law, personified as a beautiful young woman. He addresses each in turn (ll. 4747–74), transferring "lordship" from one to the other. Two glosses accompany this speech, which ends with a miniature. First, the timing of the transfer is validated by John Chrysostom, who says that before John there were the law and the prophets; those after him did not make prophecies but interpreted them.[20] This is followed directly by a passage from Augustine, explaining that the "figures of the future" in the Old Testament were both fulfilled and "swept away" by Christ in the New Testament.[21] These quotations unpack Guillaume's allegory, in which Jesus tells Old Law that she is deposed, and her tables of the law and circumcision knife are to be broken. He then instructs New Law to strip away Old Law's mantle with the admonition that "all her scriptures will be yours to gloss and to expose in the places where it will be fitting and exposition will be necessary."[22] New Law is not to be hidden or enwrapped; her head is to be bare. The miniature, which shows New Law obeying Jesus' command, encapsulates a complex understanding of the relationship between Old Testament and New in an unusual and memorable image.

This text thus provides us with one way in which Guillaume understands the word "gloser," and this is confirmed by an earlier usage in his treatment of the Annunciation. He has Mary ask Gabriel to explain how she could bear a child when she has preserved her virginity.

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[20] Cris(ostomos) Super Mt. Lex et prophetae usque ad Johannem quia post non sunt qui propharent de Christo sed qui interpretarentur ea qui de Christo sunt propheta.

[21] Item Aug(ustinus) contra Faustum in veteri testamento figure erant futurorum quas per Christum auferri opportebat ut eo ipso lex et prophetae impleantur in quibus scriptum est daturum deum novum testamentum. [In the Old Testament were figures of the future that through Christ it was necessary to carry forward so that through Him the law and prophets would be fulfilled in which it was written that God will give a New Testament.]

[22] Et a toi soient a gloser / Touz ses escris et exposer / Es lieuz où il apartendra / Et exposition faudra (ll. 4767–70).

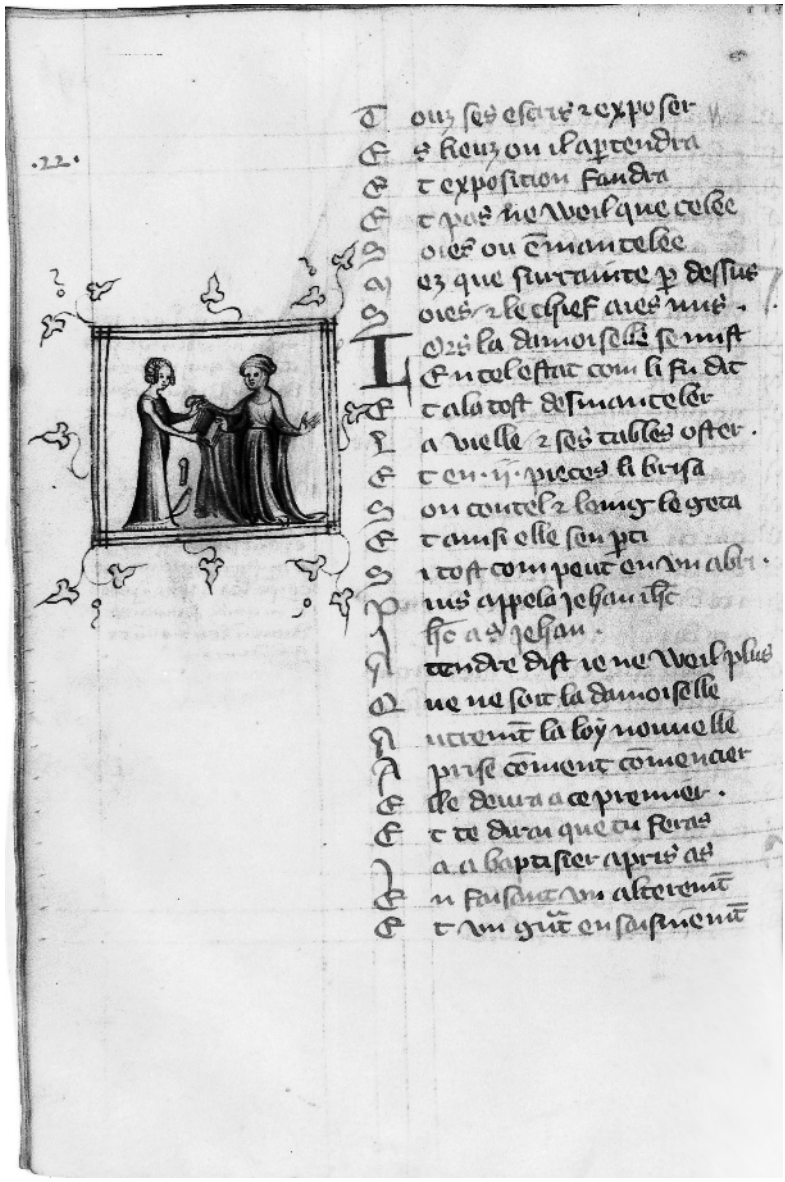

Fig. 1.7 BnF fr. 14976, fol. 95v. New Law ousts Old Law. Photo: Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Gabriel's reply is a glossed compilation of exegesis on the subject, ending with Isaiah's prophecy that a virgin will conceive and bear a son (Isaiah 7:14), which, Gabriel claims, referred to her. Mary's reply is skeptical: "Are you sure that it was said about me? But never have I seen it glossed and explained in such a way."[23] Thus, when he takes the perspective of the characters in his dream-vision, Guillaume uses "gloser" to mean specifically to interpret the Old Testament from the perspective of the New. We might understand the allegories he wove into his life of Christ as his own gloss and exposition on the narrative of the synoptic Gospels. And, in a kind of circularity, the glossators of the *PJC* then added Biblical texts and exegetical passages that both "laid bare" Guillaume's allegories while seeking to ground them in authoritative sources.[24]

As we have noted, the visual program of fr. 14976 is limited in scope compared to other manuscripts that are heavily illuminated or contain larger images suitable for contemplation, and its *mise en page* sets up a rather loose relationship among its constituent parts. Different manuscripts, certainly, might well have more readily prompted one type of response as opposed to others. To illustrate this point, we turn now to two glossed and illustrated manuscripts of the *PJC* made later than fr. 14976 that offer strong contrasts with it.

The contrasts begin with contents: the two manuscripts, both in Brussels today, contain all three of Guillaume's pilgrimage poems, and each opens with a miniature of the author addressing a large audience from a pulpit. Their *mise en page* also differs from fr. 14976: each presents the poems in two columns of equal width. This is usual for French manuscripts of this period and creates a regularity of appearance throughout the manuscripts. As the third of Guillaume's dream-visions to appear in these manuscripts, the *PJC* has a strong framing context; in the earlier of the two, the previous poem ends on same folio as the *PJC* begins. (fig. 1.8, fol. 189r) But reader-viewers approaching

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[23] Sces tu bien que pour moi fu dit? / Onques maiz ne l'oui gloser / En tel maniere et exposer (ll. 1182–84).

[24] Guillaume treats both the ministry and the passion in detail, but it is not with such startling originality. Only three images occur, in fact, in the final half of the poem: the poet/dreamer's vision, before the Passion, of a conspiracy of predatory birds to capture a great eagle (folio 149r); Adam's angel returning to him during the Ascension (191r); and Justice, Truth, and Mercy agreeing with God that the Redemption is complete (208v). The remaining text is, however, heavily glossed.

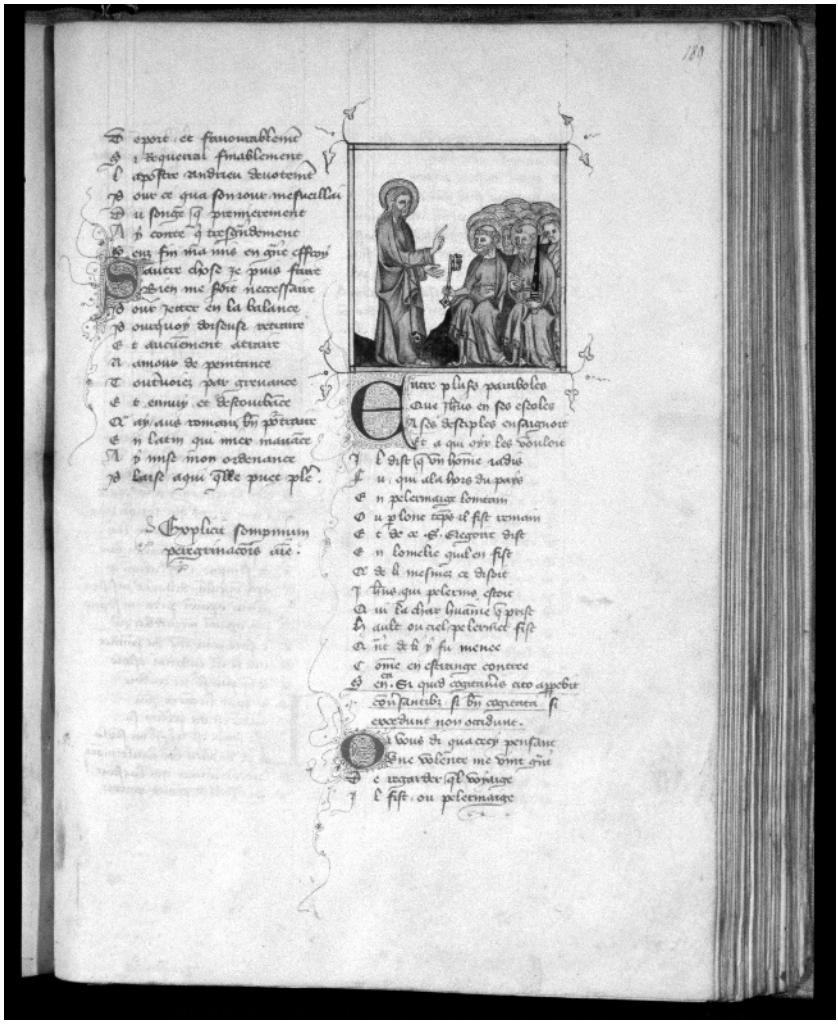

Fig. 1.8 Brussels, Bib. Roy. 10197–98, fol. 189r. Opening folio of *Pelerinage Jhesucrist*. Photo: Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, Brussels.

the *PJC* must adjust their expectations in one important regard: the two previous poems are not glossed.[25]

The earlier of the two manuscripts, Brussels, Br 10197–98, was made in France, possibly Paris, and has most recently been dated to the third quarter of the fourteenth century; it was in the library of Philip the Bold.[26] We might describe a major difference between the *PJC* in fr. 14976 and Br 10197–98 by saying that the miniatures and glosses in the outer column of the former have, in the latter, been pushed into the columns of text, creating space for themselves between the lines of the poem and leaving space for a second hybrid column of text-image-gloss. The glosses thus encounter a text arrangement used for poetry, with the initial letter of the first word in each line separated from the rest of the word and a ragged right margin. The adaptation of this arrangement for the glosses is partial: that is, the first letter of the author's name is separated from the rest of it, participating in the line pattern for poetry, but, since the glosses are prose, not poetry, the words fill the space available for each line, creating a fairly uniform right margin. If a Latin quotation continues for more than one line, there is no initial in the first column after the first line of text; instead, the gloss appears to be indented. Almost every gloss is also underscored with a thin red line. There is no use of ¶. Apparently the combination of indentation and underscore was thought sufficient to differentiate a gloss from the text of the poem. The controlling force here seems to be a desire for uniformity; the two preceding poems in the manuscript have no glosses and, with the exception of a two-column miniature on folio 1r opening the volume, they include only two miniatures, each within a text column. Thus, the *mise en page* was

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[25] Camille points to a manuscript of the *Pelerinage de l'ame* dated before 1380, BNF fr. 1648, once in the collection of Charles V, that has extensive glosses, and suggests that "glossed versions of all three of the poems might have existed" before Vérard's printing of glossed versions in 1511. Camille, *diss*. vol. 1, p. 91.

[26] Stürzinger B3; Camille no. 5. Camille locates its production in Paris and dates it *c*. 1380. Camille Gaspar and Frédéric Lyna suggest France and a date of *c*. 1375–85 in their catalogue entry, "Guillaume de Digulleville. Le Songe du Pelerinaige de Vie Humaine. Ms. 10197–98," in *Les Principaux manuscrits à peintures de la Bibliothèque royale de Belgique*, eds. Camille Gaspar and Frédéric Lyna (Paris: Société Française de Reproductions de Manuscrits à Peintures, 1937), pp. 393–395. The date to the third quarter of the fourteenth century and production in France represent the conclusions of Dominique Vanwijnsberghe, author of the entry of the manuscript in *La Librarie des ducs de Bourgogne. Manuscrits conservés à la Bibliothèque Royale de Belgique*, eds. B. Bousmanne and C. Van Hoorebeeck,, *Textes liturgiques, ascétiques, théologiques, philosophiques et moraux* (Turnhout, Brepols, 2000), 1, pp. 205–207.

already firmly established by the time the designer laid out the *PJC*, and both miniatures and glosses are subordinated to it.

A closer examination of the opening folio of the *PJC* in Br 10197–98 (fig. 1.8) will indicate how much reception can be impacted by extra-textual features. The blank space after the rubricated "Explicit sompnium peregrinacionis anime" (Here ends the dream of the pilgrimage of the soul) in the left column signals that the miniature in the right column begins a new text, even without the inclusion of a title for it. By an artist inferior to the one who created the opening miniature, this line drawing has washes of color in a limited palette of rose and blue, with yellow for haloes. The subject, Jesus addressing his apostles, illustrates literally the opening lines of the poem: "Among many parables that Jesus taught to his disciples in his lessons, and that he wanted them to hear, he said…"[27] In visual terms, the miniature establishes Jesus' authority by making him the only standing figure, allocating him half of the space, and silhouetting him against the background. The viewer's eye, whether following Jesus' right arm or his directed gaze, comes to rest on his large right hand, raised in a gesture of instruction. A group of seated, haloed figures make up his attentive audience. Only two of its members stand out as individuals, and they are easily identified by their attributes and hairstyles as Saints Peter and Paul. This is not, therefore, a historical grouping, as Paul was never part of a group around Jesus during his lifetime, but a symbolic grouping of saints; continuing behind the frame at the right edge, it could even be interpreted as extending in time as well. Equally as prominent as Jesus' teaching hand is Peter's large key, here representing the Church and indicating the transmission of Jesus' teaching through it, that is, attesting to its authenticity. Far more than a literal rendering of the poem's opening, then, the miniature asserts the orthodoxy of the text that follows: Guillaume's narrative of his idiosyncratic experience of the life of Jesus in a dream-vision.

Like the miniatures, the Latin glosses are interlinear, that is, placed between lines of the poem in the text columns. Though they may be integrated nicely into the page design, the glosses in the *PJC* in BR 10197–98 are in fact quite obtrusive with regard to the text. As folio 189v (fig. 1.9) with two glosses in each text column illustrates, readers

[27] Entre plus[eur]s aultres paraboles / Que Ihesus en ses escoles / A ses desciples ensaignoit / Et a cui ou[ir] les vouloit/ Il dist…(ll. 1–5).

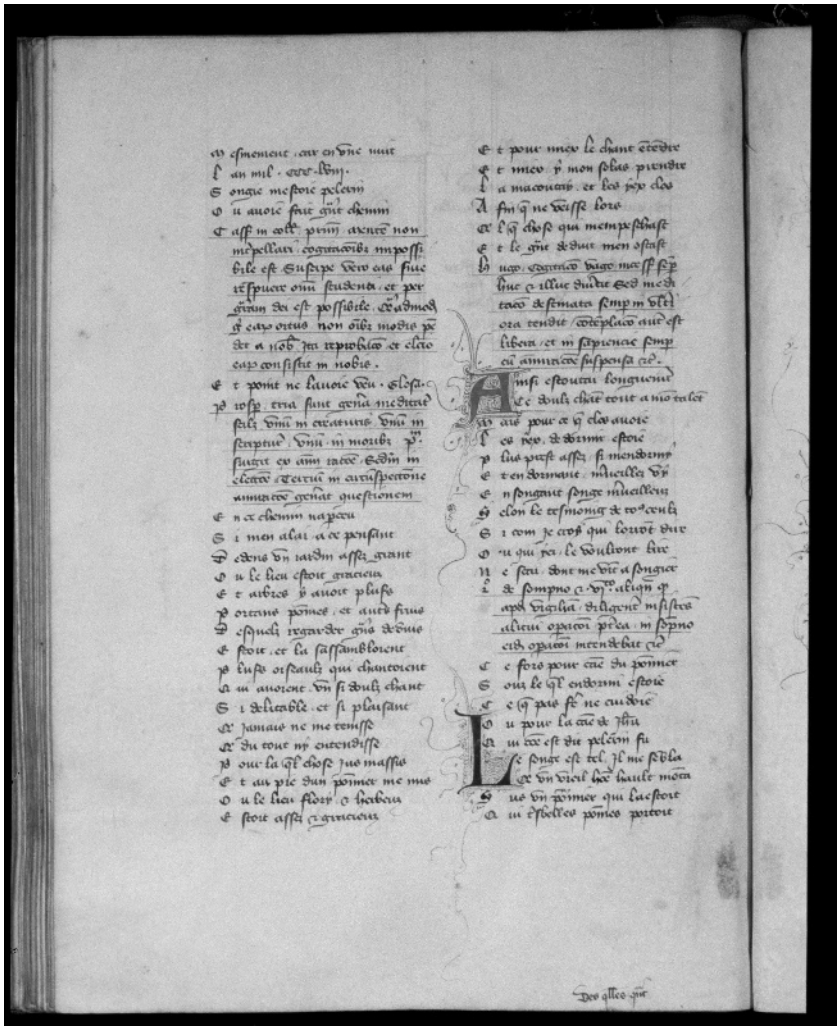

Fig. 1.9 Brussels, Bib. Roy. 10197–98, fol. 189v. Text of *PJC* with four glosses. Photo: Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, Brussels.

can confront Latin prose quotations frequently as they attempt to follow the narrative in French verse. In the left column, the two glosses are so close together that there is only one line of the poem between them. Readers, may, of course, have chosen to skip over the glosses and to run their gaze down the column until they saw the end of the red underscoring and the initial indicating a return to the text of the poem. A reader with little or no Latin would probably have learned to do this rather automatically. Others may have perused the glosses on a re-reading or have consulted them selectively. We may assume that even if they went unread, the very presence of Latin glosses lent the poem authority and assured its orthodoxy.

In spite of the density of glosses on folio 189v, there are significantly fewer glosses in Br 10197–98 than in fr. 14976. For the first few hundred lines, the glosses run in parallel, then a couple of glosses that appear in fr. 14976 are not given, and from line 812 to 2641 none of the 77 glosses in fr. 14976 is included in the Brussels manuscript. The glosses in the two manuscripts then run in parallel again, with one difference: fr. 14976 has many glosses that are simply Biblical citations of the form Mt 10, Lu 6, etc. Br 10197–98 includes almost none of these glosses. From the perspective of page design such glosses would have been unsightly as they would not have filled an entire line, but we cannot say that this is the reason they do not occur. After line 7024 glosses become infrequent in BR 10197–98, but they do not entirely disappear; the last one occurs very near the end of the poem.

The remaining six miniatures irregularly punctuate the text of the *PJC* in Br 10197–98. Four of them—the Annunciation (197v), Nativity (203v), Adoration of the Magi (208r), and Presentation in the Temple (213v)—differ significantly from the miniatures in fr. 14976 in that they are virtually stereotypical in composition and could appear in any life of Christ or liturgical manuscript.[28] Only two respond to the idiosyncratic content of Guillaume's poem: the first of these is the Circumcision, (fig. 1.10, fol. 207r) set in Mary's bedchamber. There the personification of Old Law, her tablets awkwardly held under one arm, faces down Mary as she uncovers Jesus' nude body,

[28] "Les modèles de composition utilisés sont traditionnels et monnaie courante dans la miniature française de la seconde moitié du XIV^{ème} siècle.… On pourrait citer de nombreux exemples réalisés sur le même schéma de composition." Vanwijnsberghe, p. 207.

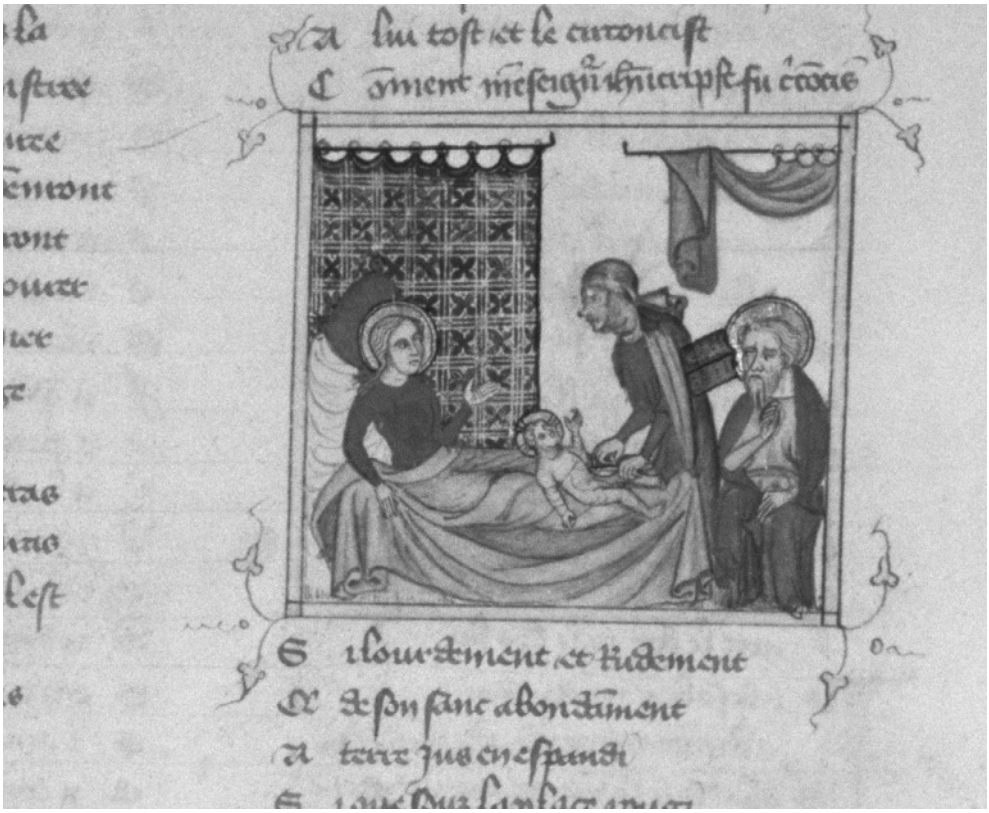

Fig. 1.10 Brussels, Bib. Roy. 10197–98, fol. 207r (detail). The Circumcision. Photo: Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, Brussels.

knife in hand. Mary's consternation visualizes her angry outburst in the text, while Joseph's reaction seems more measured. Also specific to the poem is the miniature on folio 246v of a gerfalcon attacking an eagle, a visual rendition of a dream related by the poet before he narrates the Passion, of which it is an allegory. Rather than a coherent program of illustration, BR 10197–98 seems eclectic in its combination of canonic and unique subjects. Their consistent focus is on Mary and Jesus, not surprising given the centrality of Marian devotion in Guillaume's poem.

The second of the two illustrated and glossed manuscripts of the *PJC* now in Brussels, Br. 10176–78, was created around 1400 for a Benedictine monk and produced in the north of France, probably in

the Artois.[29] It has attracted scholarly attention mainly for the "pre-Eyckian" style of its miniatures.[30] As with other manuscripts containing all three of Guillaume's pilgrimage poems, the reader-viewer of Br. 10176–78 surely had a set of expectations by the time the third poem, the *PJC*, was reached. These expectations are met in some ways: the *mise en page* remains uniform, with text in two ruled columns, and miniatures continue to occur, though their number is noticeably diminished.[31] However, both the insertion of a bifolium with two full-page miniatures (to be discussed below), and the extensive glossing of the *PJC* must have come as a surprise to many a reader-viewer.

The first of 21 miniatures illustrating the *PJC* in Br. 10176–78 precedes the opening of the text. (fig. 1.11, fol. 201r) Below a few lines of text on folio 201r ending the preceding poem, complete with explicit, a large miniature fills all of the remaining space. Intensively narrative in nature, it skips over the outer frame of Jesus addressing his disciples to provide a faithful and detailed visualization of the beginning of the pilgrim's dream. Organized around a tree whose slender trunk bisects the miniature, the image presents on the left the pilgrim lying on his back under the tree, the left side of which is populated by birds; the pilgrim raises his upper body and looks up, shielding his eyes with his left hand. From the right side of the tree an old man (Adam) plunges toward a hole in the ground, a small apple in his left hand and his body sharply bent to fit the available space. At the right edge of the miniature, above a much smaller tree, two angels converse while, in the upper right corner, cherubim look down on them from a blue heaven. This kind of comprehensive narrative image does not recur. Instead, the folio opening the poem, devoid of miniatures, includes three glosses. As in Br. 10197–98, these glosses blend into the text of the poem, but here to an even greater extent: they are not underscored in red, though a paraph mark in the margin indicates the beginning of

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[29] The miniature on fol. 299r that opens a prayer to the Virgin shows a Benedictine monk kneeling before her; the arms of the Guines family accompany the monk. This manuscript is Stürzinger B2 and Camille 4. Gaspar and Lyna describe it on pp. 379–383; Vanwijnsberghe on pp. 197–205.

[30] For a discussion of the historiographical problems surrounding the identification of this style, see Vanwijnsberghe, pp. 197–205.

[31] Of the 117 miniatures in the entire manuscript, including a large opening miniature of a preacher (presumably Guillaume) addressing an audience, only 21 accompany the *PJC*.

Fig. 1.11 Brussels, Bib. Roy. 10176–78, fol. 201r (detail). The Pilgrim Observes Adam's Fall while Two Angels Converse. Photo: Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, Brussels.

each one. They are written as prose that begins in the initial column and fills each line space. The set of glosses in this manuscript is almost identical to that in BR 10176–78.

The glossed poem unfolds in Br 10176–78 in uniform *mise en page* until folio 209 is turned, revealing an unexpected opening: most of the lines of the poem on 209v have been divided to use up two ruled column lines for each line of Guillaume's text; this arrangement stretches out the poem and shifts the reader-viewer's pace to a slower gear. A rubricated speech call near the bottom of the right-hand column that reads, "Gabriel / parle a la vierge" (Gabriel speaks to the virgin) is followed by line 1076: "A la quelle tost / dist ave" (to whom he quickly said Ave). Below this are two lines blank except for the top of a large initial A, the beginning of "Ave Maria gracia plena dominus tecum, et cetera." (Hail Mary, full of grace, may the Lord be with you, etc.). This interpolation is not part of Guillaume's poem, but supplies the words of the Annunciation that Gabriel's "Ave" signals. The opposite page, folio 210r, is blank, perhaps creating mingled frustration and anticipation for the reader-viewer. Folios 210–211 actually form a bifolium inserted into the gathering, and it opens to a visually overpowering sight: within an architecturally complex Gothic structure spread across the entire opening and populated by multitudes of saints and angels, an event is taking place. (fig. 1.12, fols. 210v–211r) The viewer's eyes dart quickly from level to level and side to side, stimulated by the excited movements of angels all around the periphery and eventually follow the gazes of the gathered saints to rest on a large figure of the Virgin Mary enthroned in the upper register on the left side. Her pose and gaze are completely oriented toward the blessing, enthroned figure on the opposite folio, God with orb and a tiered crown. A viewer could linger for hours over the individually detailed faces and garments, the richly patterned backgrounds, and the many vignettes such as the musician angels that stand on the architectural frame's colonnettes while other angels stand atop columns to catch a glimpse of the Virgin. Michael Camille has shown that "the double page composition follows the description of the court of heaven in [the *Pelerinage de l'ame*] (ll. 9417–9690)." Possibly, he concludes, its insertion here "could have been a mistake." Certainly reader-viewers working through the book in sequence would recognize it as a visualization of the court of heaven they had read, but that court of heaven, especially with its members chanting, "Sanctus, sanctus" as they are in the miniature, exists outside of narrative time so the miniature could be placed, theoretically,

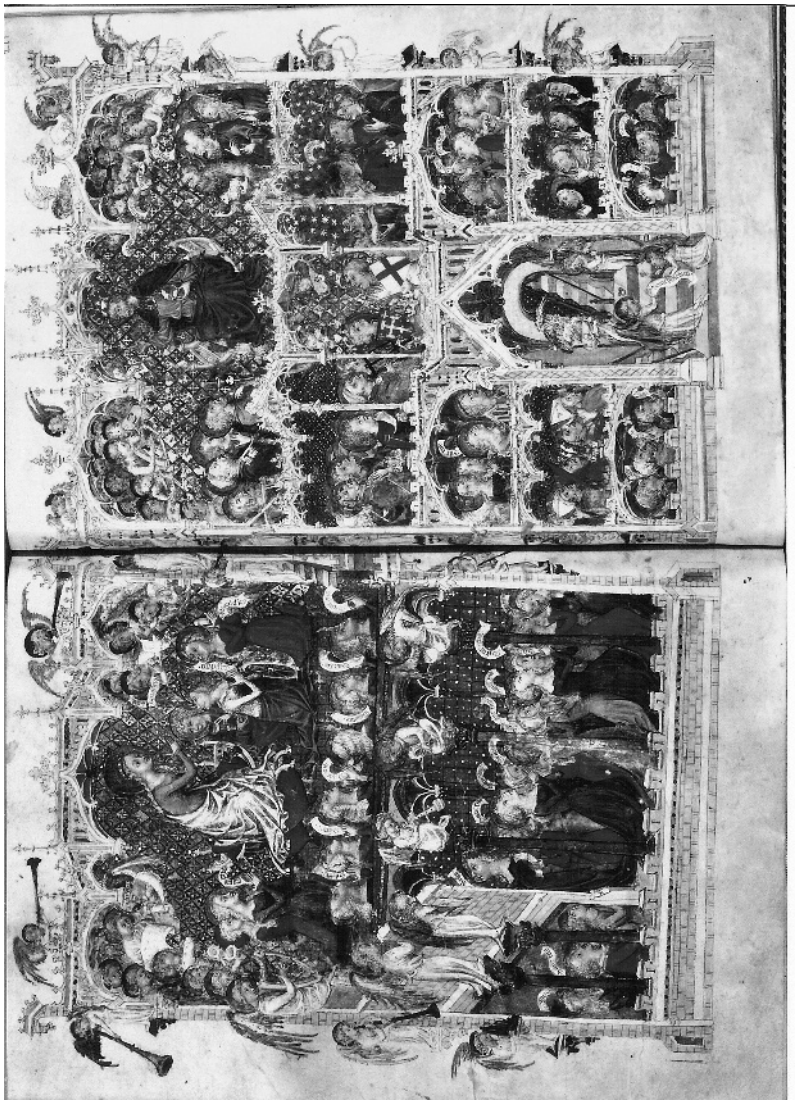

Fig. 1.12 Brussels, Bib. Roy. 10176–78, fols. 210v–211r. The Crowning of the Virgin Mary in Heaven. Photo: Bibliothèque royale de Belgique, Brussels.

at any point. Camille continues, "It is also possible that this image of the Virgin in the court of heaven was seen to fit more suitably at the very beginning of her own dramatic 'starring role' in J [*PJC*] at the point when she first is picked out to play it from above and begins her hundreds of lines of dialogue."[32] Further, the large miniature collapses the poem's narrative, claiming that from Gabriel's "Ave," all of salvation history has unfolded, with the result that Mary now sits enthroned in heaven, acclaimed by all. There are no lines of Guillaume's poem on these pages, which are given over to colorful visual celebration, though the text on St. Catherine's scroll, "Ora pro clerico," discreetly personalizes its message, assuring the clerical reader, presumably its original owner, that saints were interceding for him in heaven.

In a variety of ways, then, this bifolium indicates how strongly the non-textual elements in a manuscript could push reader-viewers toward specific ways of receiving its text. The pattern of spreading out—and slowing down—the text on the folio before or the portion of the folio above a miniature recurs for most of the remaining miniatures, all of them two columns wide and a third to a half of a page in height. In one case, after stretching out a rubric describing a miniature as much as possible, the scribe threw up his hands and wrote in the remaining space: "Nichil deficit hic"—"Nothing is missing here!" (fol. 267v, with miniature of the Footwashing on 268r).[33] These large, dominant miniatures, several of which use gold or silver paint for their background, with their strongly modeled figures serve as full stops to movement through the text they punctuate, some because they are crowded with individualized figures, others because of the complex interchange of gazes, and many because of the intense emotions captured in vigorous poses and gestures as well as facial expressions.

We have seen that the subjects of some of the miniatures in the three manuscripts of the *PJC* analyzed here respond to its unusual content by highlighting the features unique to the poem, whereas others visualize the key episodes in the underlying canonical narrative. In either case, they provide visualizations of the literal level of the poem. We have also noted that, in contrast to the relatively small number of miniatures, hundreds of glosses enable the reader-viewer to interpret

[32] Camille, *Diss*. vol. 1, p. 188.

[33] The rubric reads: Comment Jhesus apres le mangier lava les pies a ses desciples et apostres.

the poem within a venerable exegetical tradition, provided, of course, that such a reader-viewer was adequately trained both in Latin and in exegesis. These glosses ask the reader-viewer to leave the literal level and to interpret Guillaume's allegories spiritually, morally, even mystically We would like to conclude by an example of a story in Guillaume's poem certainly unusual enough to have evoked a miniature from the designer of fr. 14976, but in fact, not illustrated in any *PJC* manuscript of which we are aware. A gloss, however, offers the reader a way to situate its seemingly bizarre content within orthodoxy. This episode comes just after Jesus has told Peter and John how to find the room for the Last Supper. The narrator then speaks in what seems a non sequitur: "Each person who would do some evil ought to guard himself well from this pilgrim [meaning Jesus] in the evening and in the morning, because there is no house, place, or square where he does not see inside everywhere and where he is not present everywhere."[34] Only after inserting this strongly controlling interpretative frame does the narrator provide an illustration of the generalization: "Secretly he [Jesus] came to the home of a barber to have his hair cut. In his head at the back the barber saw two eyes, which made him draw back from them out of fear. Jesus said to him: 'Take care that you do not do further wrong, and return your neighbor's sow, which you stole yesterday morning. I saw it with these eyes in the back of my head, with which I also see all things.'"[35] In effect, this exemplum invents an episode in the literal level of Jesus' life to dramatize his omniscience. A glossator heavily underscored its function in the narrative by adding a quotation from Psalm 20.19: Prospexit dominus de celo sancto suo dominus in terram aspexit, "The Lord has seen afar from his holy heaven; the Lord has observed the earth." This memorable story enhances the reader-viewer's ability to understand the events of the Last Supper: Jesus has *seen* Judas betray him, and he speaks from that knowledge when he exposes Judas' treachery to the disciples.

We have suggested that miniatures and glosses represent two very different modes of interpreting Guillaume's text and that shifting

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[34] Bien se doit de tel pelerin / Garder au soir et au matin / Chascun qu'aucun mal ne face, / Quar n'est maison, lieu ne place / Où par tout ne voie dedens / Et où ne soit par tout presens (ll. 7717–22).

[35] Chiez un barbier couvertement / Vint pour faire oster ses cheveuz, / En la teste du quel .ii. iex / Le barbier vit par derriere / Qui traire l'en fist arriere / Par paour, a cui dist Jhesus: / "Garde, ne te meffaces plus, / Et rent la truie ton voisin / Que li emblas hier au matin! / De ces iex derriere le vi / Dont toutes choses voi ausi." (ll. 7726–36).

back and forth from the text to each of these two interpretive systems makes the reader-viewer work. This interpretive challenge to the reader-viewer is further complicated because the relationship of glosses and images to the text is not uniform. At times the images and glosses seem to push the text in different directions; at other times, to accord. Each of these modes has its weakness—in the canonical nativity story there is no woman called Old Law who circumcises Jesus, waving a bloody knife in Mary's face, yet reader-viewers might well find her so striking as a visualized character in the miniature that they remember the episode only at the literal level. And the large, colorful miniatures in Br. 10176–78 might well entice the reader-viewer away from the text and even the narrative, as we have seen in the extreme example of the two-page celebration for the Virgin in heaven. As for the glosses, they have the constant potential to shift the reader-viewer's attention away from the poem altogether to the myriad of authors and texts making up the body of Christian exegesis within which it is situated. Indeed, much of the content of the *PJC* is exegesis, which Guillaume places in the mouths of his characters. He expended a considerable effort to shape lively speeches that made theological arguments, constructing his poem almost entirely out of dialogue rather than interrupting its flow by citing authorities. One could argue that glossing "rescholasticized" the *PJC* and undid Guillaume's work by naming and directly quoting the authorities whose ideas Guillaume had cleverly woven into an accessible narrative. In a sense, the reception of his poem as a text in need of glossing judges Guillaume's effort as, if not a failure, only a partial success.

We have also tried to show that reader-viewers might also work to integrate these two modes, shifting from allegory to its exegetical interpretation and attaching both in memory to concrete visual images. Ultimately, we can only speculate as to how reader-viewers may have worked their way through Guillaume's poem in manuscript, but at the very least we can envisage a range of reading practices in response to the complex text-gloss-image matrices that these manuscripts present. We can see these different modes, whether in tension or in harmony, as participating in a kind of heteroglossia, to use the term invented by Mikhail Bakhtin to characterize the interplay of voices and styles in the novel.[36] Different reader-viewers, pushed and pulled by

[36] M.M. Bakhtin, "Discourse in the Novel," in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M.M. Bakhtin*, ed. by Michael Holquist, trans. by Caryl Emerson and

the manuscript's textual and visual modes that vie for their attention, even as they stand in dialogic relationship to each other, doubtless would have responded differently to the object before them. We do not want to suggest that these types of reading necessarily imply different types of readers. Rather, the same reader or groups of readers might have returned several times to different passages in the poem, approaching it through the different "gateways" offered by the manuscript. Thus, while the Latin glosses suggest a clerical rather than lay reader and a more detached, intellectualized reception, such a reader could have practiced a kind of code switching between more bodily and more cerebral modes. One can also imagine that the lively dialogues among the poem's protagonists might have prompted readers to read the text aloud in a semi-dramatic mode. Now and again, readers might have leafed through the text, enjoying the visual gloss provided by the images. At certain points in the text, readers might have paused to sing, for example, the Magnificat, whose verses gloss the scene of the Annunciation. Finally, prompted by one of the numerous glosses from Bernard, Augustine, Hugh of Saint Victor, or one of the many other authorities, readers could have reflected on the mystical meaning of central mysteries of the faith. The type of response would necessarily have been partly determined by the linguistic capabilities of the readers. We have suggested that few, if any, would have been inspired to return to the sources of the glosses, even if they were able to do so. Nonetheless, we may be sure that the complex apparatus of *PJC* manuscripts sought to engage reader-viewers on multiple levels and to make them work.

Michael Holquist (Austin, University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 259–422, esp. 262–63, 270–272.

2. DANGEROUS PASSAGES AND SPIRITUAL REDEMPTION IN THE *HORTUS DELICIARUM**

Elizabeth Monroe

The magisterial *Hortus deliciarum*,[1] an illuminated manuscript produced in Alsace *c*. 1167–1196, was a book meant to be performed as much as read. A hybrid of esteemed patristic texts, contemporary theological treatises, Biblical history, canon law, musical notation, poetry, calendrical tables, diagrams, and full-page illuminations, the work insisted that viewers move back and forth between times, sources, and, ultimately, levels of literacy. Texts appear in a variety of forms throughout the book: in extensive Latin passages and German glosses, and, in the illuminations, within banderoles as well as *tituli*, as backgrounds and even fragments of dialogue. Far from being a hodgepodge, the result of capriciousness or whimsy, this eclecticism was premeditated on the part of the *Hortus*' ambitious author and cultural context.

The abbess Herrad (d. *c*. 1196) created this monumental work for the edification of the canonesses at the Augustinian convent of Mount Sainte-Odile (known as the Hohenbourg), hoping it would assist in their pursuit of divine knowledge. Her famous prose introduction, "composed for the sake of their encouragement," highlights her role as author of the book and clearly states her hope that it will be instrumental in her sisters' (as well as her own) union with God:

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[1] *Herrad of Hohenbourg. Hortus Deliciarum, Studies of the Warburg Institute* 36, eds. Rosalie Green, Michael Evans, Christine Bischoff, and Michael Curschmann, 2 vols. (London: The Warburg Institute, 1979). Hereafter cited as *HD*. Unless otherwise noted, Latin inscriptions cited in the text refer to those recorded in *HD*.

> Herrad, by the grace of God, abbess, although unworthy, of the church of Hohenbourg, to the sweetest virgins of Christ faithfully working at Hohenbourg as though in the vineyard of the Lord Christ, be grace and glory, that the Lord will give. I make it known to your holiness, that, like a little bee inspired by God, I collected from the various flowers of sacred Scripture and philosophic writings this book, which is called the *Hortus deliciarum*, and I brought it together to the praise and honor of Christ and the church and for the sake of your love as if into a single sweet honeycomb. Therefore, in this very book, you ought diligently to seek pleasing food and to refresh your exhausted soul with its honeyed dewdrops, so that, always possessed by the charms of the Bridegroom and fattened on spiritual delights, you may safely hurry over ephemeral things to possess the things that last forever in happiness and pleasure. And now as I pass dangerously through the pathways of the sea, I ask that you may redeem me with your fruitful prayers from earthly passions and draw me upwards, together with you, into the affection of your beloved. Amen.[2]

In using the apian metaphor, Herrad was invoking a multivalent image of purity, wisdom, skill, and diligent industriousness,[3] and it is impos-

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[2] *Item prosa per Herradem abbatissam predictis virgunculis causa exhortationis composita. Herrat gratia Dei Hohenburgensis ecclesie abbatissa licet indigna dulcissimis Christi virginibus in eadem ecclesia quasi in Christi vinea Domini fideliter laborantibus, graciam et gloriam, quam dabit Dominus. Sanctitati vestre insinuo, quod hunc librum qui intitulatur Hortus deliciarum ex diversis sacre et philosophice scripture floribus quasi apicula Deo inspirante comportavi et ad laudem et honorem Christi et Ecclesie, causaque dilectionis vestre quasi in unum mellifluum favum compaginavi. Quadropter in ipso libro oportet vos sedulo gratum querere pastum et mellitis stillicidiis animum reficere lassum, ut sponsi blandiciis semper occupate et spiritalibus deliciis saginate transitoria secure percurratis et eterna felici jucunditate possideatis, meque per varias maris semitas periculose gradientem fructuosis orantibus vestris a terrenis affectibus mitigatam una vobiscum in amorem dilecti vestri sursum trahatis. Amen.* Translation and Latin from Fiona Griffiths, *The Garden of Delights: Reform and Renaissance for Women in the Twelfth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), pp. 232–33.

[3] Aristotle reports that in favorable weather conditions, bees work incessantly; even those that are only three days old can begin to work. *Historia Animalium*, 9.40. *Works of Aristotle*, vol. 4, *Historia Animalium*, trans. D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), 625b. Among the Latin fathers, Ambrose commends the bee's "strength in the vigor of her wisdom." *Hexaemeron*, 5.21.70 (*PL* 14:250), *Saint Ambrose. Hexameron, Paradise, and Cain and Abel*, trans. John J. Savage (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1961), p. 216. He also linked the bee with virginity and the Virgin Mary in *De virginibus*, 1.8.40–43 (*PL* 16.200). For bees in the bestiary tradition see Debra Hassig, *Medieval Bestiaries: Text, Image, Ideology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 52–61. Also see Claire Preston, *Bee, Animal* (London: Reaktion, 2006) for a lively discussion of the bee's multiple associations from ancient history to the present day.

sible to overlook the incredible effort she expended in producing her book. It must have been a truly demanding task to research, excerpt, compile, compose, and organize the over 1,100 texts and direct the inclusion of approximately 340 miniatures while remaining a dynamic and capable administrator.[4] What is somewhat less discussed, however, is how much energy or work her sisters would have had to invest to read and to understand its texts and images. Given the vastness of Herrad's enterprise, one could hardly expect the women of Hohenbourg to have found it an easy task to rejuvenate their weary souls with the book's sweet wisdom, as Herrad exhorts. Engaging with the manuscript must have been physically as well as mentally demanding, and any successful results required substantial dedication—not only on the part of the individual, but also as a communal effort. The stakes were high; Herrad twice asserts that union with Christ the Bridegroom depends upon comprehension of the *Hortus*' messages and that success is not a forgone conclusion. Imagining her sisters girded by the knowledge obtained via her book as safely and speedily journeying through transient life, Herrad views herself as passing "dangerously through the pathways of the sea." Further evidence of the importance Herrad attached to the *Hortus deliciarum* can be found in her introductory poem, which precedes the prose dedication just cited. Herrad addresses her sisters as "little troop of the true Bridegroom," and repeatedly urges them to resist worldly temptation. "Persevere in the struggle to overthrow the terrible enemies," she admonishes, and "suffer bitterness now," to be "a partner in Christ's cross, and thereafter sharer in his kingdom."[5] The poem's final stanzas refer specifically to the book, how it should be used, and the consequences of failure:

> May this book be useful
> And delightful to you
> May you never cease to study it
> In your thoughts and memory.

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[4] For an account of Herrad's life and impressive accomplishments, including the founding of two male houses (St. Gorgon in 1178 and Truttenhausen in 1180), see Fiona Griffiths, "Nuns' Memories of Missing History in Alsace (*c.* 1200): Herrad of Hohenbourg's *Garden of Delights*," in *Medieval Memories: Men, Women and the Past, 700–1300*, ed. Elisabeth van Houts (New York: Longman, 2001), pp. 132–49.

[5] *O multorum speculum, Sperne, sperne seculum, Virtutes accumula, Veri sponsi turmula. Insistas luctamine, Diros hostes sternere, Te rex regnum adjuvat, Quia te desiderat*. Translation and Latin from Griffiths, *The Garden of Delights*, pp. 225–26, 230.

Lest like an ostrich
Forgetfulness should steal upon you
And you should forsake the way
Before you have reached Christ.
Amen.[6]

The *Hortus deliciarum*, therefore, served a crucial and enduring function: to provide the cloistered community of Hohenbourg with a path to salvation. Herrad believed that her sister's eternal lives depended on grasping the knowledge contained within the book and she urged them to study it ceaselessly. Unlike the ostrich, a bird that the Bible describes as forgetful and unwise,[7] the women of Hohenbourg must remain vigilant and attentive to stay the course to Christ.

What follows is an investigation into the demands the *Hortus deliciarum* makes upon its viewers, and of some of the ways that the women of Hohenbourg might have interacted with this magnificent book. Specifically I will focus on its inscribed illuminations, and instances where Herrad combined words and pictures to stimulate her readers into direct action. A recognition of the interactive quality, what we might refer to as the performative possibilities, of the *Hortus deliciarum* is inescapable, given Herrad's inclusion of poetry, sermons, music, and picture/word combinations, material that demanded overt vocalization or its recall as much as interior, or private meditation.[8]

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[6] *Sit hic liber utilis, Tibi delectabilis, Et non cesses volvere, Hunc in tuo pectore. Ne more strucineo, Surrepat oblivio, Et ne viam deseras, Antequam pervenias. Amen.* Translation and Latin from Griffiths, *The Garden of Delights*, pp. 229, 232. For a discussion of Herrad's poetry, see Fiona Griffiths, "Herrad of Hohenbourg and the Poetry of the *Hortus deliciarum: Cantat tibi cantica*," in *Women Writing Latin: From Roman Antiquity to Early Modern Europe*, vol. 2, *Medieval Women Writing Latin*, eds. Laurie J. Churchill, Phyllis R. Brown, and Jane E. Jeffrey (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 231–63.

[7] Job 39.13–18. Further verses describe the ostrich as an unclean animal (Lev. 11.16) and associate it with devastation and cruelty (for instance, Job 30.29, Isa. 13.21, Jer. 50.39, Lam. 4.3). Despite these negative traits, the ostrich lays the largest egg, which became linked in the Middle Ages with Christ's Resurrection. Ostrich eggs were prized among church possessions, and the bird's unusual brooding habits an allegory for proper Christian behavior. According to the Early Christian *Physiologus*, the ostrich watches the heavens for the star Virgilia to appear as a signal to lay her eggs in a hole in the sand. After covering them, she forgets them. "Thus, if the ostrich knows her own time and raises her eyes to heaven and forgets her young, how much more fitting is it for us to know our time, to forget earthly things and pursue heavenly things and to raise the eyes of our hearts?" *Physiologus*, trans. Michael J. Curley (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), pp. 55–56.

[8] For a helpful overview of some of the issues surrounding performativity in medieval art and literature, see Jessica Brantley, *Reading in the Wilderness: Private Devotion*

Although the abbess does not mention the pictorial cycle in her introductions, it is clear that she considered them an integral feature of the *Hortus*. Their sheer number and inventiveness evoke a deeply creative and dedicated authorial mind, as does their distribution throughout the book. For rather than addenda, or supplements to a pre-existing text, the illustrations were planned from the very start of the project. Moreover, as Rosalie Green notes, the textual and pictorial program of the *Hortus* is virtually unprecedented.[9]

Complicating any discussion of the *Hortus deliciarum* is the fact that it is no longer extant. The holdings of the Strasbourg Municipal Library, where the manuscript had been kept since the eighteenth century,[10] were incinerated during the Franco-Prussian war in 1870. The manuscript is known today through extensive copies and tracings executed by French and German antiquarians during the nineteenth century.[11] These modern responses take a variety of forms: hundreds of note cards that record inscriptions as well as long extracts, free-hand drawings, and hand-colored copperplate engravings of the illuminations based upon tracings. (figs. 2.1, 2.2) For almost eighty years, scholars were more or less left to rely on this material (edited and reproduced in a variety of nineteenth-century publications),[12] until the reconstruction by Rosalie Green *et al.* came to fruition in 1979.

The most significant subsequent study is a monograph by Fiona Griffiths, who places the *Hortus* within the context of church reform and women's intellectual history. She notes the relative lack of sustained attention paid to Herrad and her manuscript since the reconstruction—there is almost a thirty-year gap between the publication of the reconstruction and Griffiths' book—despite recent work on monastic

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and Public Performance in Late Medieval England (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp. 1–25.

[9] Green, in *HD*, p. 29.

[10] See Bischoff, in *HD*, pp. 13–15, for a history of the manuscript's itinerary after it was given to the bishop of Strasbourg in 1546, when a devastating fire all but destroyed the Hohenbourg abbey.

[11] See Evans (pp. 4–5) and Green (pp. 17–22) in *HD* for a discussion of the nineteenth-century sources and how they relate to the reconstruction.

[12] Chief among them are Christian Moritz Engelhardt, *Herrad von Landsperg, Aebtissin zu Hohenburg, oder St. Odilien, im Elsass, in zwölften Jahrhundert und ihr Werk: Hortus Deliciarum* (Stuttgart and Tübingen: J.G. Cotta, 1818), which apparently was one of the earliest monographs devoted to any medieval manuscript, and Alexandre Straub and Gustav Keller, *Herrade de Landsberg. Hortus deliciarum publié aux frais de la Société pour la Conservation des Monuments historiques d'Alsace* (Strasbourg, 1879–1899).

O OMNIPOTENS DOMINVS OMNIBVS REBVS BONVS EXISTAT
Lucifer signaculū similitudinis dei plen sapiena & perfect decore in deliciis paradisi dei fuit inferior deo.
Modèle

Fig. 2.1 *God as creator*, top, and *Lucifer in glory*, bottom, *Hortus deliciarum*, fol. 3r. Photo: Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

Fig. 2.2 *Lucifer plotting rebellion*, top, and *Expulsion of the rebel angels*, bottom, *Hortus deliciarum*, fol. 3v. Photo: Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

women and literacy.[13] In focusing on visionary women and the increasing exclusion of women from the intellectual trends developing during the twelfth-century period of renaissance and reform, Griffiths argues, scholars have overlooked the *Hortus deliciarum* as evidence of an entire community of intellectually engaged religious women that runs counter to the notion of the decline in female education during this period. As Herrad's book makes clear, women could and did attain a high level of education and participate in the monastic and scholastic debates of the day. The fact that the *Hortus* is unparalleled in the history of medieval female authorship "may indicate the processes by which certain texts have survived and the limitations on women's public activity more than it does their actual interests or abilities."[14]

Herrad and the *Hortus deliciarum*

In instituting the Augustinian Rule at the abbey, Herrad's predecessor and teacher, abbess Relinde (d. *c*. 1176), initiated Hohenbourg's most intellectually vital period and likely began work on the *Hortus deliciarum*.[15] Herrad, obviously, demonstrated a high level of literacy, and the canonesses at Hohenbourg would have received some instruction in

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[13] While a full survey of sources is beyond the scope of this paper, good starting points are Rosamond McKitterick, "Women and Literacy in the Middle Ages," in *Books, Scribes and Learning in the Frankish Kingdoms, 6th–9th Centuries*, *Collected Studies Series* CS 452 (Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1994), XIII; David Bell, *What Nuns Read: Books and Libraries in Medieval English Nunneries* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1995); Joan M. Ferrante, "Women's Role in Latin Letters from the Fourth to the Early Twelfth Century," in *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. June Hall McCash (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), pp. 73–105; Alison I. Beach, *Women as Scribes: Monastic Reform and Book Production in Twelfth-Century Bavaria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); *Voices in Dialogue: Reading Women in the Middle Ages*, eds. Linda Olson and Kathryn Kerby-Fulton (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005). A broader consideration of both lay and religious women's engagement with literary culture can be found in D. H. Green, *Women Readers in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

[14] Griffiths, *The Garden of Delights*, p. 22. How gender impacted the survival rates of medieval sources has only recently attracted attention. See, for instance, Katrinette Bodarwé, "Gender and the Archive: The Preservation of Charters in Early Medieval Communities of Religious Women," in *Saints, Scholars, and Politicians: Gender as a Tool in Medieval Studies, Festschrift in Honour of Anneke Mulder-Bakker on the Occasion of her Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, eds. Mathilde van Dijk and Renée Nip (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 111–32.

[15] Griffiths, *The Garden of Delights*, pp. 27–51 and 54–56; Green, in *HD*, pp. 24–25. Also see Robert Will, "Les origines de l'abbesse Relinde de Hohenbourg," *Archives de l'église d'Alsace* 21 (1974), 1–12.

Latin. Therefore, we can assume that at least some of the sisters could follow along with the text, which seems to have been copied with an eye for maximum comprehension. Frequently, one finds passages marked *Hic lege* ("Read here"), emphasizing key points to the primary reader or lesson leader, and over 1,000 Latin and High German glosses are inserted above unusual words, longer passages, in the margins, and even on the images.[16] Considered broadly, they reinforce the view of the *Hortus* as a teaching tool. In fact, the second illumination in the book was glossed with *Hic lege*. A full-page miniature of God as creator and Lucifer in glory inaugurates the cosmic drama of Christian salvation history on folio 3r. (fig. 2.1) Enthroned in the center of the page's top half, God is flanked by two symmetrical groups of angels. Continuing the vertical axis, Lucifer stands just beneath God's feet in the folio's lower half, holding an orb and scepter while stretching his magnificent wings over two pairs of angels on either side of him. Dressed in a richly ornamented robe and pointed shoes, clean-shaven and with short, curled hair, he is at once similar—and a foil to—God in his beauty and wisdom.[17] When the reader turns the page, they witness Lucifer in the top half of the illumination (again in luxurious garb, minus the orb and scepter, and with folded wings) plotting his rebellion and in the lower half, his consequent expulsion from heaven.[18] (fig. 2.2) St. Michael and two angels drive multi-pronged spears into the throats of Lucifer and his rebel angels; their crumpled and bleeding bodies are in a freefall at the bottom of the folio. Upside down with faces now distorted by hideous grimaces, flame-like, spiky hair, and cruel talons sprouting from their fingers and toes, Lucifer and his cohorts radically subvert the prior vision of beauty and order.

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[16] In trying to account for the unsystematic nature of the glosses, which run throughout the manuscript, Curschmann observes that while the motivation behind them remains somewhat mysterious, there can be no doubt that "the group which worked to produce this codex over a period of many years was small and homogenous, and it was guided throughout by a *spiritus rector* who paid attention to the most minute detail." Curschmann, in *HD*, p. 73.

[17] An inscription running horizontally across the center of the illumination's frame reads *Lucifer signaculum similitudinis Dei plenus sapiencia et perfectus decore in deliciis paradisi Dei fuit inferior Deo*, which derives from Ez. 28.12–13: "And say to him: Thus saith the Lord God: Thou wast the seal of resemblance, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou wast in the pleasures of the paradise of God…"

[18] *Lucifer consilio suo malo superbe intendit et Deum creatorem offendit et consilium suum placuit quibusdam angelis* (across the top of the frame); *Michahel et angeli ejus cum dracone preliantur et draco et angeli ejus pugnantes vincuntur et victi de cello projiciuntur* [Apoc. 12.7] (across the middle of the frame).

If Herrad had not already grabbed her audience's attention with this visually arresting struggle, she commands it outright with the inscription, situated above the rebel angel in lower right corner of the page, *Hic lege: Solet queri utrum omnes* ("Read here: Moreover there is asked whether all [demons]") a reference to a selection from Peter Lombard's *Sentences* that Herrad copied one hundred folios later in the book, and hence a direct instruction to the *magistra* to read or to recall this extract.[19] Not even four folios into the *Hortus deliciarum* and already the women of Hohenbourg were asked to navigate through and meditate upon Herrad's original poetry and prose, patristic texts (in the form of pseudo-Augustine on fol. 2r), biblical verses, recent theology,[20] and inscribed miniatures with no immediate model, one of which exhorts the reader to consult further textual passages. Manual and the mental exertion are thus both required, with serious effect. Just through the very act of turning over folio 3, "the reader sets into motion the cycle of sin and salvation with which the entire *Hortus* is concerned. Indeed, by turning the page and initiating Lucifer's transformation, the reader is made complicit in the ensuing narrative."[21]

This dramatic opening leads to a further elaboration upon the days of creation, with Old Testament episodes and allegorical material continuing through folio 80r. A full-page illumination of the Tree of Christ's Ancestry on folio 80v signals the start of the book's middle

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[19] Following the heading "*Ex sententiis Petri Lombardi, an omnes demones sint in hoc aere caliginoso an aliqui in inferno; et si Lucifer religatus sit in inferno ex quo temptavit Christum*," on fol. 103v, Herrad includes an excerpt (from Book II, dist. 6, chap. 5) describing how demons torture their victims in hell and how Christ descended there to lead forth the just but left the iniquitous behind. *Magistri Petri Lombardi Parisiensis episcopi Sententiae in IV libris distinctae*, ed. Ignatius C. Brady Series: *Spicilegium Bonaventurianum* 4–5, 3rd ed., 2 vols. (Grottaferrata: Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, 1971–81). For further examples of textual and visual elements glossing each other in the *Hortus*, see Griffiths, *The Garden of Delights*, pp. 121–22. For how such instances might point to a book being used in a didactic situation, see Gernot R. Wieland, "Gloss and Illustration: Two Means to the Same End?" in *Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts and their Heritage*, eds. Phillip Pulsiano and Elaine M. Treharne (Vermont: Ashgate Publishing Company, 1998), pp. 1–20.

[20] In addition to Peter Lombard, excerpts from Honorius Augustodunensis' *c.* 1120 *Speculum ecclesiae* (*PL* 172:807–1107) appear on folio 2v and 3v. Fiona Griffiths comments on Herrad's reliance upon contemporary texts as "the most striking aspect of the *Hortus*," that runs counter to ideas of the marginalization of women from university learning. Fiona Griffiths, "Herrad of Hohenbourg: A Synthesis of Learning in *The Garden of Delights*," in *Listen, Daughter: The Speculum Virginum and the Formation of Religious Women In the Middle Ages*, ed. Constant J. Mews (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 228.

[21] Griffiths, *The Garden of Delights*, p. 112.

division, an extensive cycle devoted to Christ's life. This section has the highest ratio of pictures to text, though much remains unrecoverable do to omissions in the nineteenth-century record. Following the events of Pentecost, the book's final section highlights the Church's struggle and ultimate triumph and includes depictions of the Battle between the Virtues and Vices, the life of Antichrist, the Last Judgment, and Apocalypse scenes.

If one of the first images they encountered in the *Hortus deliciarum*, Lucifer and his entourage plummeting from heaven, warned the women of demonic forces in the world, the last image could provide succor, perhaps even a glimpse of their ultimate aspiration. The penultimate folios of the *Hortus deliciarum* depict the abbey's past and present on the summit of the verdant Mount Hohenbourg. (figs. 2.3, 2.4) At the left of folio 322v, St. Odile accepts the key to the monastery from her father, Duke Adalric of Alsace, who, according to legend, founded the abbey in the late seventh or early eighth century. He is consequently rewarded with heavenly access and drawn up to Christ by St. Peter and the Virgin Mary. This scene might have brought to mind the final sentence of Herrad's prose introduction to the book cited above, in which she describes her perilous journey through earthly life and pleads for her sisters' spiritual support. The poem and the illumination reinforce themes of danger, redemption, and spiritual ascent, and, by extension, the necessity of absorbing the lessons of the *Hortus deliciarum* to achieve salvation.

Further personalizing this message is a group portrait of the current Hohenbourg population. At the opposite end of this double-folio illumination, Herrad presents her sisters to abbess Relinde, and they simultaneously face Christ and his heavenly entourage.[22] Carefully identified via inscriptions over their heads, the 60 women are arranged in six horizontal registers, half-length, and somewhat individualized through variations in the colors of their habits. Only the first and the last woman are nameless; perhaps they are intended to stand in for those who have already passed as well as though who will join

[22] For a discussion of how what this miniature tells us about the relationship between Relinde and Herrad and authorship of the *Hortus deliciarum*, see Judith Collard, "Herrad of Hohenbourg's *Hortus Deliciarum* (The Garden of Delights) and the Creation of Images for Medieval Nuns," in *Communities of Women: Historical Perspectives*, eds. Barbara Brookes and Dorothy Page (Dunedin, New Zealand: University of Otago Press, 2002), pp. 39–57.

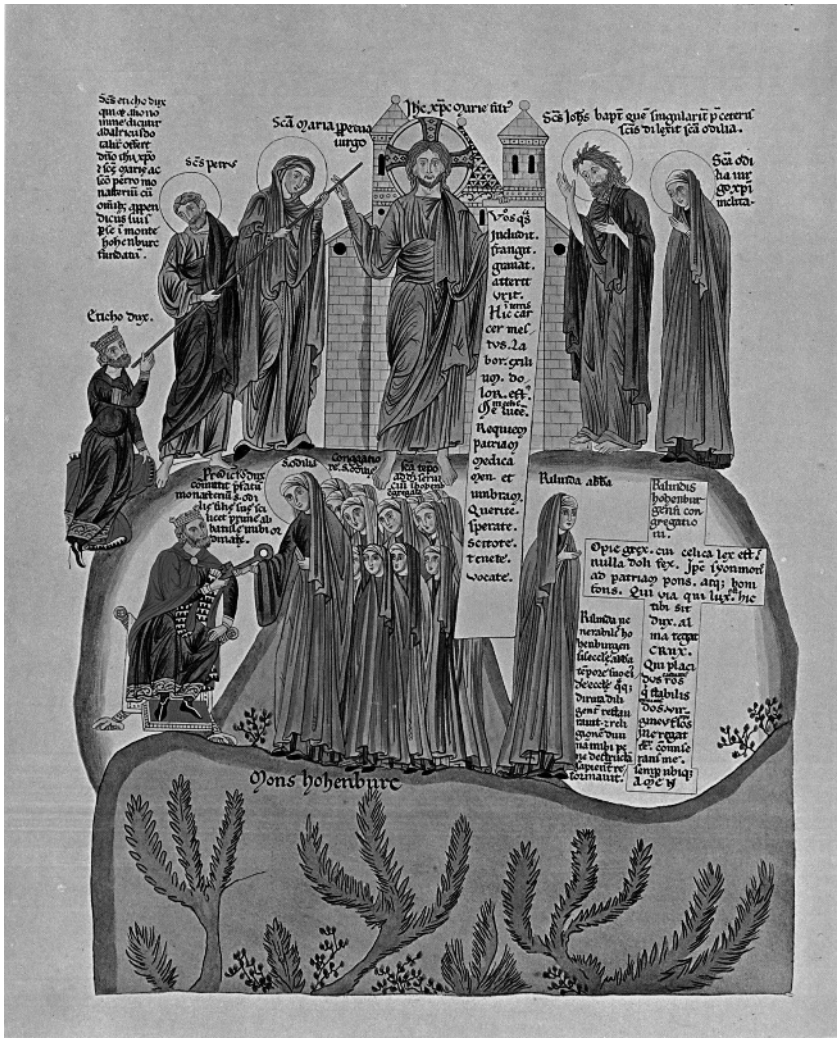
Sōs ercho dux
Sōa Maria genetrix
Ihc xp̄c quis sit?
Sōs Johs bapt̄ quē singularit̄ p̄ ceteros
Sōs Petrus
Cricho dux.
Hic cer mel tvs. La bor. gulu uo. do lon. est.
Requiem patrum
Relindis abba
Relindis hohenburgēsis con gregationis.
Ohe grex. cui celica lex est. Nulla dolus fex. Ipe iyonmos ad patriam pons. anq; hom tons. Qui via qui lux. hic
Relinda ne nerabilis ho henburgen sis eccl'e. abba
Qui placi dos tos
Hortus deliciarum
Mons hohenburc

Fig. 2.3 *Founders of the abbey of Hohenbourg with abbess Relinde, Hortus deliciarum*, fol. 322v. Photo: Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

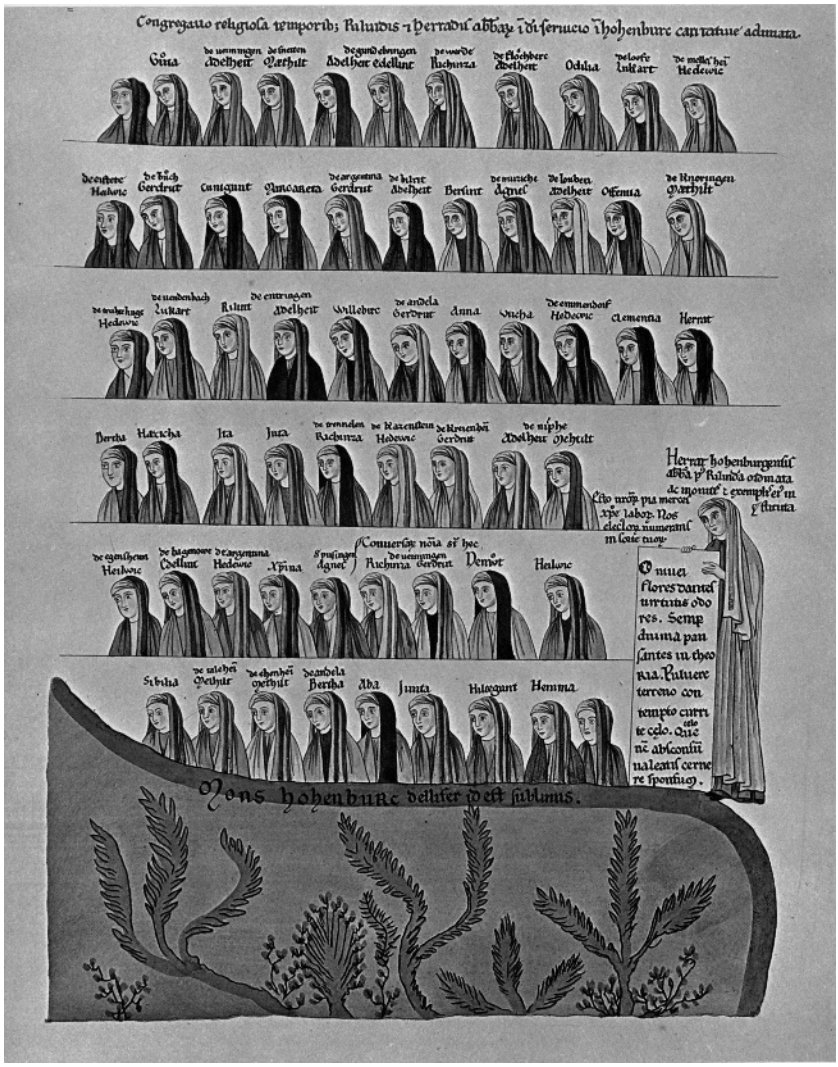
Congregauit religiosa temporib; Ruiundis ⁊ Herradus abbay ⁊ di seruicio Hohenburc cantatue admata.
Herrat hohenburgensis abbā p Ruiundā ordinata de monte ⁊ exemplar ei⁹ in ⁊ structa
O mnes flores uerni uirtutis odores. Semp diuina pan santes in theo ria. Patuere terreno con tempto curri cule te celo. Quę nē abscondit ualeant cerne re sponsuq.
Mons hohenburc dilucr dest sublimis.

Fig. 2.4 *Herrad and the women of Hohenbourg, Hortus deliciarum*, fol. 323r. Photo: Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

the abbey in the future. Here, then, is the very community for whom Herrad created the manuscript, the women whom she admonishes in her dedicatory poem to examine its pages ceaselessly. This illumination, unusual in the naming of monastery's current members, has been compared to the *liber vitae* or *liber memorialis* tradition, in which the names of members and patrons of a religious house were recorded, sometimes over the course of centuries.[23] Although these books were silent, neither read nor heard after their creation, "they would be reminders of the duty to commemorate collectively within the liturgy those whose individual names were on the page and who, collectively, comprised the identity of the community."[24] Herrad, likewise, seems to have been engaged with the manuscript throughout her life, and insertions of half-leaves, textual and pictorial interpolations, and marginal notes suggest both that she revised her work and that others in the monastery made additions after her death.[25] The manuscript remained a dynamic source of information, perpetually open to revision and reshaping by future generations.

Several physical features of the *Hortus deliciarum* are fundamental to this discussion of interactivity. First, the book was big. The majority of its over 342 folios measured around 52 by 36 cm, an indication not only of Herrad's substantial financial investment, but also a signal that the book was probably intended for communal discussion, questioning, and explanation. Grand, unwieldy, and lavishly illustrated, the *Hortus* is difficult to imagine in the hands of a single nun, except Herrad, for an extended period of time. As the primary repository of spiritual knowledge for the entire community, the book was designed to be seen and experienced by many, not a select few. Indeed, Herrad and her nuns lived during an era when reading was still primarily a group activity and oral, as opposed to private, individual and silent.[26]

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[23] Collard, "Herrad of Hohenbourg's *Hortus Deliciarum*," p. 41.

[24] McKitterick, "Women and Literacy in the Early Middle Ages," p. 14.

[25] Evans, in *HD*, pp. 3–4; Green, in *HD*, pp. 22, 25. Also see P. R. Robinson, "A Twelfth-Century *Scriptrix* from Nunnaminster," in *Of the Making of Books: Medieval Manuscripts, Their Scribes and Readers. Essays Presented to M.B. Parkes*, eds. P.R. Robinson and Rivkah Zim (Vermont, Ashgate Publishing Company, 1997), esp. pp. 89–90, for another instance in which a female monastic community continued to add to a manuscript written by one of their nuns, following her death.

[26] Foundational readings in intersections of orality and literacy include: Ivan Illich, *In the Vineyard of the Text: A Commentary to Hugh's* Didascalicon (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), Brian Stock, *The Implications of Literacy: Written Language and Models of Interpretation in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Princeton: Princeton

Second, these imposing folios remained unbound, probably assembled within a protective portfolio. By keeping the pages loose, not only would Herrad have been able to insert additional material as she saw fit, but also she or another learned member of the convent could rearrange the folios according to the intended lesson, creating almost limitless juxtapositions between textual excerpts and the illuminations. The reader is compelled, in other words, to create her own imaginative journeys through its pages.

In contrast to the majority of the textual extracts Herrad included in the *Hortus deliciarum*, many of the miniatures seem to be original compositions or unusual departures from known models.[27] Another striking feature of the illuminations is that they frequently substitute explanatory inscriptions (in the form of brief identifications and scriptural citations as well as more substantial passages) for painted backgrounds. Inscriptions also fill numerous inscribed scrolls and elaborate *tituli*. Rather than afterthoughts, these inscriptions are critical components of the illuminations and attest to the *Hortus*' overall didacticism. This also seems to suggest that Herrad played a role in the design of the miniatures, working with both the scribe and artist(s) in perhaps shaping the choice of these inscriptions. The inscriptions do more than replicate, in words, what the pictures show and confirm the pedagogical function of Herrad's book and her sophisticated forms of visual exegesis rather than, say, promoting devotional guidance or visionary revelation.[28] Given this complex interdependence

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University Press, 1987), Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (New York: Routledge, 1982), and M.T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England, 1066–1307* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979).

[27] For a list of the unprecedented and rare, see Green, in *HD*, pp. 35–36.

[28] Here we might contrast Herrad's book with that of another famous German nun, Hildegard of Bingen's *c.* 1179 *Scivias*, a book of prophetic visions. Whereas Herrad often seems to have conceived of words as a necessary component of pictures, Hildegard left the majority of her illuminations un-inscribed and tended to organize textual descriptions and visual translations of her visions as discrete units. So while both books demonstrate a symbiotic relationship between text and image, the nature of this relationship a bit different in each. For a comparison of Hildegard and Herrad, see Carolyn Muessig, "Learning and Mentoring in the Twelfth Century: Hildegard of Bingen and Herrad of Landesberg," in *Medieval Monastic Education*, eds. George Ferzoco and Carolyn Muessig (New York: Leicester University Press, 2000), pp. 87–104. For the *Scivias*, see Lieselotte E. Saurma-Jeltsch, *Die Miniaturen im "Liber Scivias" der Hildegard von Bingen: die Wucht der Vision und die Ordnung der Bilder* (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1998). The bibliography devoted to Hildegard is justifiably vast. The essays within *Voice of the Living Light: Hildegard of Bingen and Her World*, ed. Barbara Newman (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), offer a glimpse

between text and image, one can imagine the more learned women at Ste-Odile, perhaps even Herrad herself, juxtaposing certain folios with others to guide her sisters through theological discussions. In this manner, the unlettered could concentrate on the illuminations while a literate teacher could enhance their understanding by reading the inscriptions aloud and referring to relevant texts and images in other sections of the manuscript. I have already pointed to several instances of Herrad's creative use of text and how the literary elements of her pictures directly caused her readers to participate with her book. A focus on only three inscribed illuminations, a scant fraction of the hundreds of such image/word combinations, will suffice to show how the *Hortus deliciarum* became a catalyst for action.

Reading, speaking, and performing the Hortus' illuminations

My first example is a pair of wheel-shaped diagrams, *rotae*, that in the manuscript pictorially conclude the Old Testament and initiate a typological recapitulation of Old Testament themes and events. (figs. 2.5, 2.6) A dazzling meditation upon the transition and indissoluble union between the Old and New dispensations, the *rotae* assert that New Testament spiritual sacrifices (Christian virtues) supersede animal sacrifices offered under Mosaic law.[29] Inscribed scrolls form the outer ring of both compositions, while inside the frame a continuous banderole rhythmically arcs and folds over itself, forming ten open medallions, circles within each circular diagram. Radial scrolls emanating from Christ, who in both *rotae* forms a vertical axis, suggest the spokes of a wheel. Everywhere one looks there are inscriptions—in the outer frame, on the looping banderole, in between the radial scrolls—which Herrad must have intended as necessary footholds for her audience when confronting these extraordinary pictures.

In the first *rota* (fol. 67r), the temple veil (*velum templi*) has been pulled aside to reveal a startling, double-headed composite of Moses and Christ underneath the inscription *Vetus et novum testamentum*

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into her many talents, while more recent bibliography can be found in Tilo Altenburg, *Soziale Ordnungsvorstellungen bei Hildegard von Bingen, Monographien zur Geschichte des Mittelalters* 54 (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 2007).

[29] The ingenious complexity of the *rotae* has been impressively elucidated by Annette Krüger and Gabriele Runge in "Lifting the Veil: Two Typological Diagrams in the *Hortus Deliciarum*," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 60 (1997), pp. 1–22.

in simul junctum. The double figure's feet rest atop a seven-branched candlestick, symbolic of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, next to which a goat is sacrificed on an altar (*hostia igne crematur*). Populating the outer medallions are unnamed male figures, differentiated through hairstyle and facial hair, who hold further animal and vegetable sacrifices (lamb, goat, wheat, etc.) offered under the Old Covenant. Inscribed with brief, declarative biblical verses (the bulk of which are from Leviticus and Deuteronomy) that emphasize the strictness of the law, ten straight scrolls emanate from Moses/Christ and connect directly to each sacrificial object. The virtue of these sacrifices is then signaled in inscriptions around the medallions (the lamb, for instance, prefigures the *innocentia* of Christ). The male offerants are mere vehicles; unnamed, they extend their arms to lift each sacrifice while mutely regarding Moses/Christ, the only "speaker" in this diagram.

Taking a cue from Michael Camille, who explored the ways medieval artists can "define the mood as well as the content of an utterance through the visual form of writing,"[30] we note an arresting change of atmosphere in the second *rota* (fol. 67v). When the reader turns the folio over, from recto to verso, she sees an enlivened image with Christ as the priest king (*Christus rex et sacerdos*) standing up rather than sitting, and double the number of scrolls, half of which are gently curved rather than straight. In contrast to the male figures who offer the sacrifices in the first diagram, the ten Christian virtues in the second diagram are female personifications, identified in their framing medallions (*Obedientia, Abstitentia, Conpassio*, etc.). As in the first *rota*, inscriptions operate in several ways here. They define the very pictorial and exegetical boundaries of the illustration, as in the inscription within the circular frame, which asserts that the prefigurative meaning of the Old Testament sacrifice is revealed in Christ as king, priest, and true sacrifice.[31] Brief inscriptions identify various visual features, while longer passages expound upon the more complex elements, such as the New Ark upon which Christ stands.[32] But the texts have also been

[30] Michael Camille, "Seeing and Reading: Some Visual Implications of Medieval Literacy and Illiteracy," *Art History* 8 (1985), p. 38.

[31] *Rex et crux lux sunt, bos ara figura fuerunt; cedat ovis, capra, bos sit victima vera sacerdos*. Krüger and Runge, "Lifting the Veil," p. 11.

[32] Within the church element of the Ark: *Archa, id est ecclesia que per crucem liberatur*, and, under the Ark's trestle, *Archa testamenti in qua urna aurea habens manna et virga Aaron que frondurerat et tabule testamenti superque erant cherubin glorie obumbrantia propiciatorium* (Heb. 9.4–5). Krüger and Runge, "Lifting the Veil," pp. 8, 10, n. 24.

Fig. 2.5 *Rota of Old Testament sacrifices, Hortus deliciarum*, fol. 67r. Photo: Fondation de l'Oeuvre Notre-Dame de Strasbourg.

incorporated within the pictorial scheme to imply a dialogue, an aural exchange rather than a series of proclamations as in the first *rota*. For all eleven figures in this second diagram are associated with inscribed scrolls and thus appear to participate in a lively dialogue. Linear scrolls again unroll from Christ outward, one to each of the Virtues, who in response aim curved scrolls inwards, toward him. *Paupertas*, at the top left of the circle, even raises her hand in a gesture of reception. The scrolls that Christ and the Virtues exchange have a tangible presence; the Virtues cast them out or clutch them tightly, as though desperate for or savoring physical contact with the Savior himself. In some cases, Christ's straight speech scrolls contact the opening edge of the Virtue's medallion (as is the case with *Abstinentia, Conpassio*,

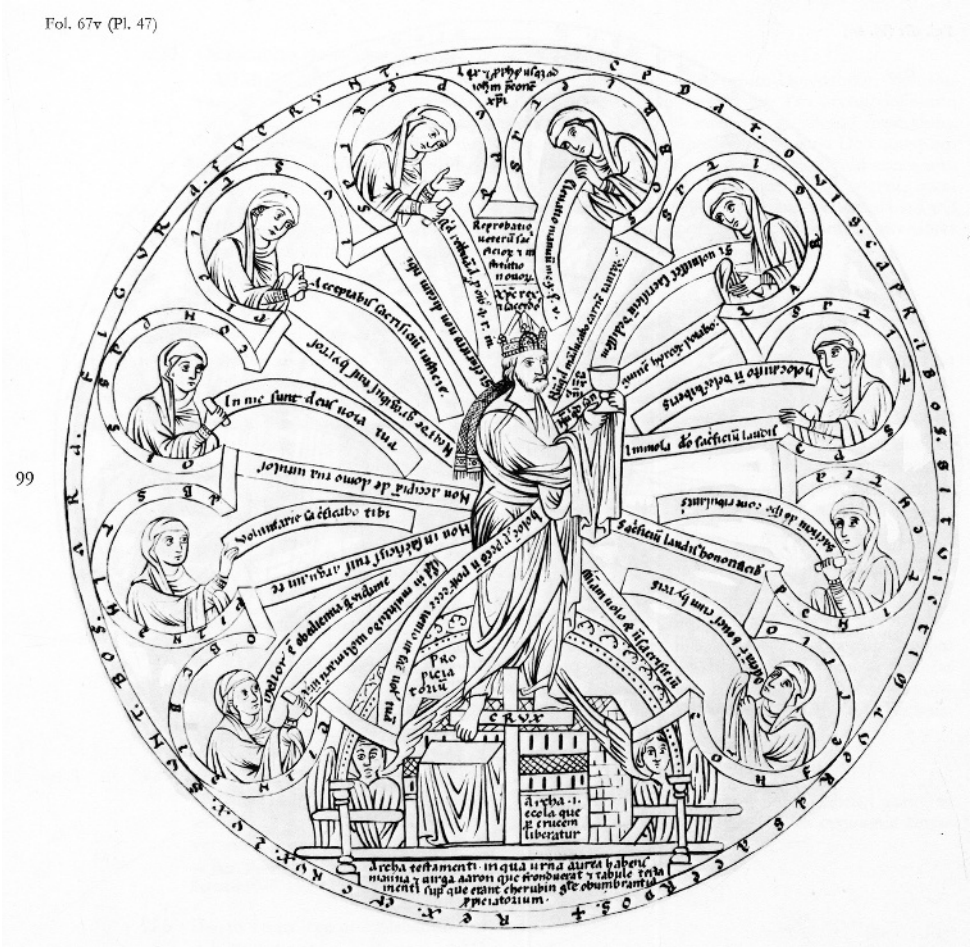

Fig. 2.6 *Rota of New Testament virtues*, *Hortus deliciarum*, fol. 67v. Photo: Fondation de l'Oeuvre Notre-Dame de Strasbourg.

and *Justicia*, for instance), but in others, the Virtues physically catch Christ's words in their right hand (*Obedientia, Castitas*).[33] Here the picture's designer has gone so far as to suggest the passionately loving nature of their responses: *Confessio* holds her scroll to her cheek

[33] With few exceptions (*Sobrietas, Castitas, Penitentia*), the Virtues hold the scrolls with their right hands, perhaps affirming the traditional distinction in the west between the right (good) and left (sinister) sides of the body. James Hall, *The Sinister Side: How Left-Right Symbolism Shaped Western Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), esp. pp. 14–89.

as she replies, while *Largitas*' scroll appears to spring directly from her heart. That Herrad would conceptualize the Old Law as the more rigid prefiguration of the New Law's dynamic fulfillment fits squarely within established Christian theological and exegetical traditions contrasting the letter and the spirit of the Law and is not so surprising. But the sophistication and breathtaking originality of her thought is such that its finer points might have eluded the grasp of those just beginning their studies. In an attempt to aid her sisters in contemplating the *rotae*, Herrad seems to have urged them to connect with the *rotae* through their own conversations, be they spoken outright or internally meditated upon. The scroll that winds down and across the lower half of Christ's body forming one end of the inner, multi-lobed frame partially encircling each Virtue. Its text, from Psalm 39,[34] is oriented to emanate from Christ; in relation to the viewer the script reads right to left and upside down, thereby making it clear that Christ is the author of these words. Touching the top of this curved banderole is a straight text scroll, also written with script that reads right to left, which is inscribed "To what purpose do you offer me the multitude of your victims?" (Isa. 1.11). *Obedientia* catches this proclamation/question in her right hand and replies "Obedience is better than sacrifices," (1 Kings 15.22) as indicated by the speech scroll issuing directly from her mouth. The designer of this miniature accentuates the dialogic nature of this interaction by orienting *Obedientia*'s script left to right, facing Christ.

Once our attention passes to the right side of the circle of Virtues, however, from *Paupertas* to *Sobrietas*, we notice that their scripts are now oriented upside down and right to left, difficult to read without physically turning the folio. Christ's straight scrolls, meanwhile, continue to be inscribed left to right, and are hence easily legible. Herrad and her designer therefore remain consistent in signaling the speaker of these biblical passages, ensuring that the Virtues continue to have a voice in this dialogue with Christ. If the script were oriented left to right, who was speaking the text would be unclear: Christ or the Virtue? It seems to have been crucial, therefore, that the viewer recognized the Virtues' active participation in the scene. They are not merely

[34] *Holocaustum pro peccato non postulasti, ecce venio ut facerem voluntatem tuam*. Krüger and Runge, "Lifting the Veil," p. 10.

passive recipients of Christ's words, but are shown to engage with him, and, importantly, each other, through gesture and animated discussion, hence different from the male offerants in their behavior. This design decision must have been motivated, at least in part, by Herrad's sensitivity to her specific audience; perhaps her sisters imagined themselves in the role of the Virtues, grouped around Christ and eagerly conversing with him.[35] In this light, we might imagine the *rota* of the Virtues as a kind of pictorial metaphor for the women of Hohenbourg gathered around a *magistra*, each in turn recalling or responding to (in either an inward or outward fashion) the Biblical dialogue. In her provocative work on the role of goddesses within the religious, literary traditions of the medieval west, Barbara Newman challenges and reconceptualizes the usual classification of "personification" to designate allegorical attributes of God (Sapientia, Ecclesia, Fortuna, etc.). Endowed with voice and body, the goddesses, Newman argues, were important mediators of the intellect and imagination: "One may 'envision' them, enter into a dialogue with them, take them as mothers or lovers, teachers of partners, mistresses or friends—and by means of these relationships encounter God. Such an encounter is not immediate or apophatic, but mediated, whether it occurs in an ecstatic vision or in the course of reading, contemplating an image, or composing a text."[36] Here it is interesting to contrast the brief, declarative form of inscriptions in the first *rota* with the repeated questions of the second diagram. Questions demand contemplation, the formulation of responses in a way different from meditation upon declaratives. The communal experience of reading the *Hortus deliciarum* is thus evoked in these diagrams to some degree, as the interpretation of any single reader/listener derived from an accretion of questions, observations, and insights of others.[37]

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[35] The visual similarity between the Virtues and the portraits of the Hohenbourg nuns on fol. 232r (fig. 2.3) has been noted by Madeline H. Caviness, "Anchoress, Abbess, and Queen: Donors and Patrons or Intercessors and Matrons?" in *The Cultural Patronage of Medieval Women*, ed. June Hall McCash, pp. 105–45. For further insights into the many visual references to women in the *Hortus*, see Collard, "Herrad of Hohenbourg's *Hortus deliciarum*," pp. 48–56.

[36] Barbara Newman, *God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry, and Belief in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), pp. 42–43.

[37] Camille, "Seeing and Reading," pp. 32–33.

An important ramification of the script orientation in the *rota* miniature is that to make sense of what she is seeing, the viewer must repeatedly flip the folio upside down and right side up to be able to read the inscriptions. And the back and forth, rotating wrist in this necessary hand gesture plays upon the circular format of the illustration. The seeing, reading, and interpreting of this diagram, therefore, demanded physical engagement with the folio, and the unrolling, turning motions required in reading these pages necessarily are a fulfillment of Herrad's poetic admonition to her nuns that they ceaselessly "examine from all sides" (*volvere*), the *Hortus* in their hearts and minds.[38] Krüger and Runge also note the importance that Herrad placed upon physical manipulation of this folio, for in the very act of turning it over from the recto to the verso side, her sisters participated in the creation of its messages.[39] As in the depiction of Lucifer's rebellion and fall from grace, the *rotae* are arranged on opposite sides of the same folio ensuring that the audience of the *Hortus deliciarum* would have to touch, to handle, or at least observe the transformation of its pages from one state to another in order to activate processes of comprehension.

I would now like to move to a second inscribed miniature that activates speech in the *Hortus*' audience, but in several different ways than the *rotae* diagrams. At the midpoint of the manuscript (and hence in Herrad's narrative of salvation history), following an extensive textual excursus on Christ's Passion, folio 150r depicts in its upper half a menacing crowd as they prepare to crucify him. (fig. 2.7) Christ stands quietly, head slightly bowed, hands folded in front of him, on the cross' left side, facing his jostling executioners on the opposite side. Only four inscriptions, written on the background of the image, surround the figures. Biblical verses (Mark 15.20, 22) over the assembled men describe their actions and identify the location of the Crucifixion as Golgotha or Calvary. "*Jhesus ascendit crucem*," occupies the otherwise empty space between Christ and the cross, while behind his back a passage from the *Speculum ecclesiae* describes the cross as light of the world (*Hec sancta crux est nobis lampas lucis eterne*).[40] In the lower right corner, further Biblical verses assert the

[38] This point is also made by Karl Morrison, *History as a Visual Art in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 115.
[39] Krüger and Runge, "Lifting the Veil," p. 21.
[40] *Speculum ecclesiae, PL* 172:1002.

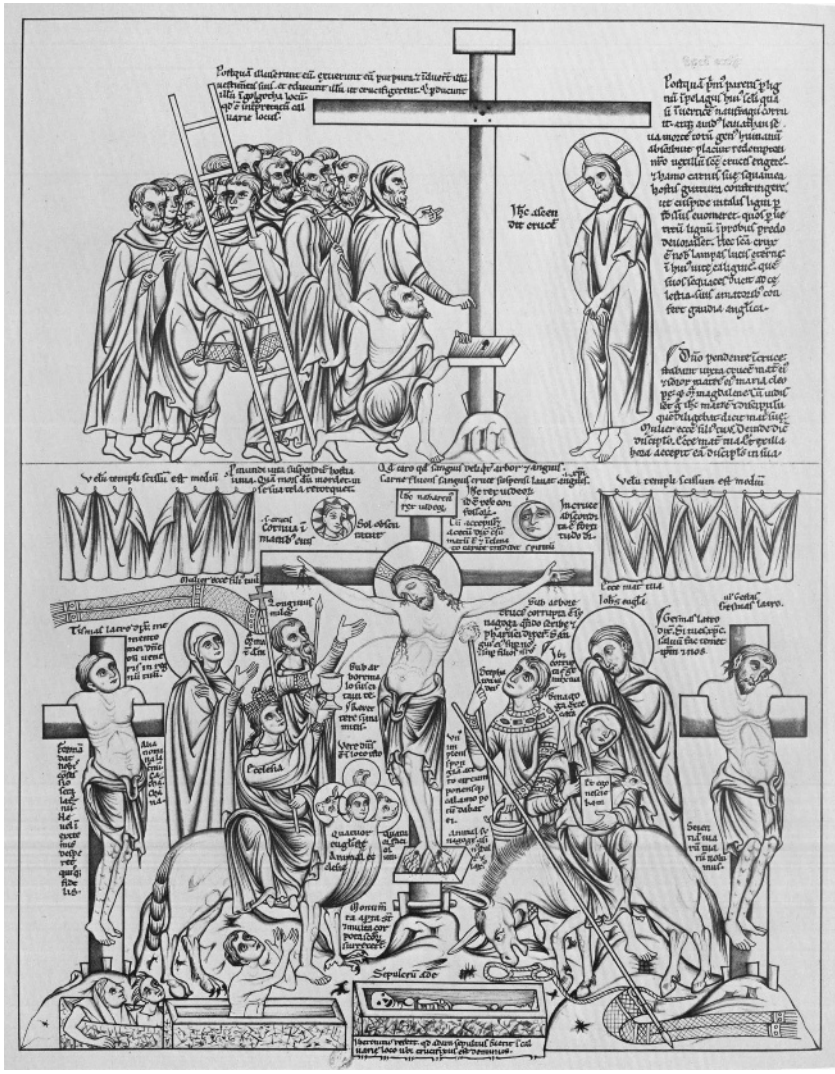

Fig. 2.7 *Christ before the cross*, top, and *Calvary*, bottom, *Hortus deliciarum*, fol. 150r. Photo: Bibliothèque Ntionale de France.

presence of Christ's mother Mary, her sister Mary Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene at the Crucifixion as well as Christ's admonition to his disciple John, "Behold thy mother," (John 19.25–27) despite the fact that no women are depicted in this scene. In textually enhancing this image with Christ's commendation of John as Mary's adoptive son and Mary as John's adoptive mother, Herrad was likely invoking the *cura monalium*, or pastoral care of women, as a central aspect of the way to salvation for ordained men.[41] She also prompts her audience, in considering this text/picture combination, both to think ahead in the narrative, to the moment when Christ makes his dual declaration, and to "imagine in" the three Marys at the foot of the cross. For in the Crucifixion scene just below the textual passage, only Mary, Christ's mother, is depicted.

As with the *rotae*, the Calvary miniature visualizes the transition from the Old Law to the New through Christ's sacrifice, and his blood as contained in the sacramental chalice is the focal point of all three miniatures discussed in this essay: presented by Christ himself in both *rotae* and shed by him on the cross in the lower half of folio 150r. The three miniatures are also similar in that elements within them are unprecedented within Romanesque art.[42] The female personifications of Church and Synagogue flank the cross and, as in many Crucifixions dating back to the Carolingian era, Ecclesia raises a chalice to collect the blood spurting from Christ's wound, thereby instituting the Church on earth.[43] Mary and John, Longinus and Stephaton, the Good and Bad Thieves, also stand in their traditional places and attitudes, while the dead issue from their tombs and Adam's open coffin reveals his skeletal remains at the cross' base. The Sun and Moon appear over the cross arms, while in the upper corners the temple veil is shown twice as it tears.[44] Covering almost every bit of space remaining on

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[41] Herrad in fact glossed the lower image, the Crucifixion, for a second time with John's words (*Mulier ecce filius tuus; Ecce mater tua*) over the heads of the evangelist and Mary, reinforcing to her sisters the proper interpretation of the Crucifixion. Griffiths, *The Garden of Delights*, p. 219.

[42] For the Calvary scene, Gérard Cames, *Allegories et symboles dans l'Hortus deliciarum* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971), p. 45.

[43] For an extended discussion of Ecclesia and Synagoga in the Latin West, see my "Images of Synagoga as Christian Discourse (1000–1215)," (Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 2003).

[44] For parallels between the rent veil and Christ's side wound, see Jeffrey Hamburger, "Body vs. Book: The Trope of Visibility in Images of Christian-Jewish Polemic," in *Ästhetik des Unsichtbaren: Bildtheorie und Bildgebrauch in der Vermoderne*, eds.

the drawing are inscriptions that explicate the events taking place. As in the *rotae* diagrams, Christ anchors the illumination as both fulcrum and epicenter, but now the inscriptions (the majority of which again derive from Biblical citations), appear unfettered, uncontained by banderoles or clearly demarcated borders. It may seem as though the sheer multitude of texts—38 in all—make this image easily translatable, in fact the picture resists easy interpretation precisely because of the relationships of the inscriptions to the drawing in which they are embedded. I believe that the strategic placement of these texts, the very manner in which Herrad glossed this image, is further evidence of her sophisticated exegetical insights. Now abandoning the speech scrolls so prevalent in the two *rotae*, she creates a proliferation of interpretive channels, almost countless possibilities for connecting word and image.

In several cases, Herrad divides a Biblical citation to communicate what seems more a personal conviction than a Christian truth. For instance, Genesis 28:16 "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not," begins over the head of the tetramorph that carries Ecclesia to the cross, while its second half appears upon the placard Synagoga holds on her lap.[45] These inscriptions are unprecedented in depictions of Ecclesia and Synagoga,[46] and the significance of their specific placement should not be overlooked. "Surely the Lord is in this place" could be interpreted as a collective pronouncement by the faithful on Christ's right, positioned as it is upon the illumination's background next to several figures—Longinus, Ecclesia, and her hybrid animal.

David Ganz and Thomas Lentes (Berlin: Reimer, 2004), esp. pp. 123–24. I thank Dr. Hamburger for making a copy of this essay available to me in advance of its publication.

[45] *Vere Dominus est in loco isto. Et ego nesciebam*. This verse refers to the story of Jacob realizing God's presence. After being blessed and sent away by Isaac to take a wife, Jacob sleeps in a cave and dreams that the Lord appears to him. Upon waking, Jacob says, "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not."

[46] A noteworthy, though seemingly coincidental, consonance in inscriptions occurs in Wilhem Müncher's glossed psalter from 1418 (Eichstätt, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. 213, fol. 4v). Ecclesia (crowned and collecting Christ's blood in her chalice) and Synagoga (blindfolded, emptying the contents of her chalice onto the ground, and holding a goat by the horns) flank Christ as the Man of Sorrows in the miniature's top half. Reproduced in color in Michael Stolz, "Körper und Schrift. Wissensvermittlung im *Psalterium glossatum* von Wilhelm Müncher (1418)," in *Die Vermittlung geistlicher Inhalte im deutschen Mittelalter. Internationales Symposium, Roscrea 1994*, eds. Timothy R. Jackson, Nigel F. Palmer, and Almut Suerbaum (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1996), pp. 97–117.

"And I knew it not," however, is held, voiced, as it were, by Synagoga specifically. Herrad thus highlights Synagoga's ignorance and attaches disbelief to the Jewish church.[47] Moreover, Synagoga is the only figure in the composition to carry an inscribed placard, and she grips this statement of doubt as a tangible attribute with a presence as concrete as her knife and sacrificial goat.

Of course, it was not at all uncommon for Christian artists to highlight Judaism's obsolescence at the moment of the Church's earthly establishment. Several inscriptions on Herrad's miniature, however, are highly unusual in this particular context and shape a multi-layered understanding of Ecclesia and Synagoga as Brides from the Old Testament Song of Songs. These texts suggest dialogue between Christ, Ecclesia, and Synagoga, yet their precise meanings remain excitingly multivalent, in part because, without banderoles, we are unsure who is speaking to whom. For example, "Return, return, Sunamite," (Song of Songs verse 6.12) is placed between Christ and Ecclesia, just to the right of her chalice (*Revertere Sunamitis*). Following the tradition established by Origen (d. *c.* 254), medieval Christians most often reinterpreted the Song of Songs as a dramatic allegory of the mystical marriage between Christ (the *sponsus*) and the Christian soul or the Church, Ecclesia (*sponsa*).[48] In his *Commentary*, Origen is specific in his treatment of the Song in dramatic form: "We see a bride appearing on the stage…aflame with longing for her Spouse…Let it be the Church who longs for union with Christ…the Church as a corporate personality who speaks."[49] The text celebrates the Bride's beauty,

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[47] Further inscriptions (*Synagoga excecata; Animal sinagoge asinus stultus*) and iconographic elements (mantle that obscures her eyes, upside down banner) make this abundantly clear. The illuminator also suggests the Jews' active refusal to accept Christ by creating a visual and psychological affinity between Synagoga and the unbelieving thief. They are the only two figures present at the Crucifixion who turn from Christ, and their shared inscription, *Scientiam viarum tuarum nolumus* (a truncated passage from Job 21.14), asserts: "Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we do not desire knowledge of your ways." In addition, Stephaton, who stands behind Synagoga and offers Christ vinegar on a sponge, is labeled specifically as a Jew (*Stephaton Iudeus*).

[48] *Origen: The Song of Songs. Commentary and Homilies*, trans. R. Lawson (New York: Newman Press, 1957). For a concise description of Origen's allegorical interpretations of the Song of Songs and their influence, see E. Ann Matter, *The Voice of My Beloved: The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), esp. chap. 2.

[49] Lawson, pp. 58–59. Joseph R. Jones, in "The 'Song of Songs' as a Drama in the Commentators from Origen to the Twelfth Century," *Comparative Drama* 1 (1983),

purity, and fecundity; she is referred to as the fairest of women, the beloved, bride of Lebanon, and likened to a lily among thorns, a garden enclosed. The Church Fathers naturally attributed these ideals to the Virgin Mary, though even more prevalent was an identification of the Bride as Ecclesia.[50] Given the Song of Songs verses on the *Hortus*' Calvary folio, some readers must have interpreted Ecclesia as Christ's Bride, riding in triumph to meet him. Regarding the specific inscription "*Revertere Sunamitis*," however, theologians often connected the Sunamite with the Synagogue, Bride of the Old Alliance, who is exhorted by Ecclesia to abandon her disbelief and return to God's grace by joining the Christian community. One of the most popular Song of Songs commentaries during the Middle Ages was written by Haimo of Auxerre (d. 875), rubrics verse 6.12 so that it is clearly Ecclesia who speaks to Synagoga ("'*Revertere, revertere, Sunamitis.' Vox est Ecclesiae, Synagogam ad fidem invitantis*").[51] Despite her prior degradation, Synagoga is welcome to redeem herself through Christ:

> The Sunamite is interpreted either captive or despised. Such was Synagoga before the advent of Christ, captive clearly bound to the devil and hated by God, who did not know Christ and his message. Return, return so that we may look upon thee, it is as we behold your beauty and chastity.[52]

Like Origen, Haimo exploited the dramatic qualities of the Song, noting that it was "composed as if it were a play."[53] Therefore in Herrad's image, it seems plausible that some of the nuns of Hohenbourg would have seen Christ and/or Ecclesia calling to Synagoga across the page, urging her to accept Christianity even as she blindly turns away. This

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pp. 17–39, argues that Origen's influence was so persuasive that all Medieval readers of the Song interpreted the Biblical text as a sort of drama.

[50] The patristic, allegorical tradition did not, for the most part, interpret the Bride of the Songs as the Virgin Mary until the twelfth century, although the liturgical tradition made this identification as early as the third century. For an overview of Marian interpretations of the Song of Songs by patristic commentators, see Ann Astell, *The Song of Songs in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990), esp. chap. 2. The liturgical tradition is explored in Rachel Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800–1200* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002).

[51] *Commentarium in Cantica Canticorum, PL* 117:341.

[52] "*Sunamitis interpretatur captiva vel despecta. Talis erat Synagoga ante adventum Christi, captiva videlicet vinculo diaboli, et despecta a Deo, quia Christum ad salutem suam missum non cognovit. 'Revertere, revertere ut intueamur te,' id est ut pulchritudinem tuae castitatis aspiciamus.*" *PL* 117:341.

[53] "*quasi comico stylo compositus*," *PL* 117:295.

reading is enhanced through further Songs lyrics written on both sides of the cross.

In another instance of Herrad's textual splitting, verse 8.5 begins just under the stream of blood issuing from Christ's wound: "Under the apple tree I aroused you," and continues in a slightly altered form on the other side of the page above Synagoga's head, "Here the one who bore you was corrupted."[54] Theologians traditionally interpreted the first half as praise for Ecclesia, and it was not uncommon for them to add rubrics as though Synagoga herself admires the Church.[55] By positioning the verse in two parts on opposite sides of the cross, the miniature's designer reinforces the disparity between Ecclesia and Synagoga as Brides (one aroused or awakened, and the other corrupted), a concept that is not intrinsic to the Biblical text of the Song. Further, it is relatively uncommon to see Synagoga defeated or rejected in twelfth-century Song of Songs manuscript illuminations.[56] Instead, artists more frequently emphasize Synagoga's conversion and acceptance by Christ into his heavenly kingdom.[57]

The connection between Ecclesia as Christ's Bride and the Crucifixion is suggested through the inscription "Under the apple tree I aroused you," written directly underneath Christ's blood and adjacent to Ecclesia's chalice: through his sacrificial death on the cross, Christ brings the Church to life. How the Song of Songs and Synagoga's presence at Calvary are related might at first be less evident, but is clarified by a third inscription written underneath Christ's left hand: "Under the tree of the cross Synagoga is corrupted, When the scribe and the Pharisee will say, His blood be on us and on our sons."[58] This line seems to be an original composition, although its first half, "Under the

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[54] *Sub abore malo suscitavi te. Ibi corrupta est genetrix tua* (as opposed to the Biblical verse, *Sub abore malo suscitavi te, Ibi corrupta est mater rua, Ibi violata est genetrix tua*).

[55] For instance, Haimo of Auxerre, *Commentarium in Cantica Canticorum*, *PL* 117:352.

[56] The earliest, extant depictions of Synagoga in Song of Songs illuminations, however, do occur within the context of rejection. Marie-Louise Thérel, "L'Origine du thème de la 'Synagogue répudiée,'" *Scriptorium* 25 (1971), pp. 285–89.

[57] Elizabeth Monroe, "'Fair and Friendly, Sweet and Beautiful': Hopes for Jewish Conversion in Synagoga's Song of Songs Imagery," in *Beyond the Yellow Badge: Anti-Judaism and Antisemitism in Medieval and Early Modern Visual Culture*, ed. Mitchell Merback (Leiden: Brill, 2008), pp. 33–61.

[58] *Sub abore crucis corrupta est Synagoga quando scribe et Pharisei dixerunt: Sanguis ejus super nos et super filios nostros.*

tree of the cross Synagoga is corrupted," clearly derives from Song of Songs verse 8.5. The second half, "When the scribe and Pharisee will say: His blood be on us, and on our sons," excerpts Matthew 27.25, which Christian theologians often understood in terms of the Jews' responsibility for Christ's execution. In his *Commentary on the Song of Songs*, for instance, which Herrad excerpts several times in the *Hortus*, Rupert of Deutz (b. *c.* 1075) explicates verse 8.5 in the following manner: "*Under the apple tree*, where I revived you, under the wood of the cross, where I redeemed you…but your mother Synagoga, the one who bore you, the Jewish people here was corrupted…here she was violated, clamoring: *His blood be on us and on our sons*."[59] The design of the *Hortus* image seems therefore indebted, at least in part, to Rupert of Deutz's emphasis upon the New Bride's awakening at the site of the cross and the Old Bride's corruption. Although Herrad's pictorial conception of Ecclesia and Synagoga at the base of the cross is original, two earlier stained glass windows establish a precedent for depictions of Synagoga with Matthew 27.25 paired with Ecclesia as *sponsa* at the Crucifixion. In both cases, Synagoga is marked with attributes of degradation and blindness, holding the Instruments of the Passion or wearing a Jew's hat.[60]

Lest we see a strict binary of opposites in Herrad's Calvary illumination, of Ecclesia as triumphant and Synagoga as irrevocably defeated, it is well to remember that other material in the book points to an ultimately redemptive position *vis a vis* Synagoga and the Jews. Perhaps the most profound medieval association between Synagoga and the

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[59] Rupert's commentary continues: "Therefore, that repudiated one, this one and such like her comes up, and just as if he (Christ) said in regards to one among you: *Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the gentiles come in, and therefore all of Israel shall be saved* (Rom. 11.25)." *Commentaria in Canticum canticorum* (*CCCM* 26), 162: 196–206. Although she did not mention him by name, Herrad transcribed four passages from Books 3 and 4 of Rupert's Song of Songs commentary.

[60] In a *c.* 1147 window from the choir of the cathedral at Châlons-sur-Marne, blindfolded Synagoga brandishes the Instruments of the Passion, while Ecclesia is associated with Songs 3.9. The design of this window has been attributed in part to Rupert of Deutz's exegesis. Louis Grodecki, "A propos des vitraux de Châlons-sur-Marne: Deux points d'iconographie mosane," in *Le Moyen Age retrouvé*, vol. 1, *De l'an mil a l'an 1200*, pp. 325–38 (Paris: Flammarion, 1986). Wearing a pointed hat, Synagoga in a *c.* 1166 window from St. Patroclus in Soest (Westphalia) turns from the Crucifixion with her eyes closed. While only part of her scroll is still extant, it is possible to read MALED[I]CT OM[N]IS. Ecclesia holds a scroll with the Song's first line and kisses Christ on the cross. Ulf-Dietrich Korn, *Die romanische Farbverglasung von St. Patrokli in Soest* (Münster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1967), pp. 30–37.

Sunamite was made by the twelfth-century theologian Honorius Augustodunensis, whose extremely popular *Expositio in Cantica canticorum* relates that at the End of Days the Sunamite/Synagoga will unite with the Bridegroom Christ.[61] Honorius, too, saw the Song as a drama, with the different parts sung by various characters. His extremely complicated treatment is virtually cinematic, "an opulent costume fantasy of allegorical processions and tableaux. It is, in short, a new kind of *divina commedia*."[62] Herrad excerpted Honorius' writings more often than those of any other author, and scholars have traced their influences on the design of several of the *Hortus* miniatures.[63] The Crucifixion illumination, therefore, if not showing the reconciliation between Ecclesia and Synagoga, holds the promise of Synagoga's future assimilation.[64] Indeed, later in the manuscript, Herrad made the Jews' conversion explicit through at least two illuminations. In one, the

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[61] Written towards the end of Honorius' career, the *Expositio* (*PL* 172:347–496) achieved almost immediate recognition; seventeen extant copies were produced during the twelfth century alone. Honorius divides the Song of Songs into four sections, treating each with a separate interpretational method (historical, allegorical, tropological, and anagogical). Christ and his Church must pass through four ages (*ante legem, sub lege*, *sub gratia*, and *sub antichristo*), and the Bride has four manifestations, each traveling from the four corners of the earth to greet the Bridegroom. The Sunamite (*sub gratia*) rides in the Quadriga of Aminidab from the West. Matter, *The Voice of My Beloved*, pp. 58–85.

[62] Jones, "The 'Song of Songs' as a Drama," p. 31.

[63] Bischoff, in *HD*, pp. 46–49, discusses Herrad's use of Honorius' writings. Among early-twentieth century discussions of the ways his exegesis affected the miniatures in the *Hortus deliciarum* are Albert Boeckler, *Die Regensburg-Prüfeninger Buchmalerei des XII. und XIII. Jahrhunderts*, *Miniaturen aus Handschriften der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek in München* 8 (Munich: A. Reusch, 1924); Otto Gillen, *Ikonographische Studien zum Hortus deliciarum der Herrad von Landsberg*, *Kunstwissenschaftliche Studien* 9 (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1931); Adolf Weis, "'Die Synagoge' am Münster zu Strassburg," *Das Münster: Zeitschrift für christliche Kunst und Kunstwissenschaft* 1 (1947), pp. 65–80, and his influence is cited throughout Cames, *Allégories et symboles*.

[64] "L'antinomie entre Église et Synagogue n'est d'ailleurs qu'apparente puisque finalement la Synagogue convertie se confrondra avec l'Église-vierge sous les traits de l'Épouse: Honorius Augustodunensis montre que les deux Églises apparues l'une avant l'Incarnation, l'autre après, ne sont en réalité qu'une seule et même bien-aimée, en union avec le Christ par leur commune adhésion au message évangélique." Cames, *Allégories et symboles*, p. 48. See Weis, "Die 'Synagoge,'" pp. 75–80, for the impact of Honorius and the *Hortus deliciarum* on the design of Ecclesia and Synagoga as Christ's Brides, whom he interpreted as united at the End of Time, in the thirteenth-century sculptural program of Strasbourg Cathedral. Otto von Simson, however, was less convinced of the iconographic consonance between the *Hortus* Calvary miniature and the Strasbourg portal, although he does accept and elaborate upon the influence of Honorius' Song of Song's exegesis. Otto von Simson, "Le programme sculptural du transept méridional de la cathédrale de Strasbourg," in *Von der Macht des Bildes*

Apostle Peter baptizes Synagoga and converts the Jews after Pentecost (fol. 167v, though now missing). And in a pictorial cycle related to the Antichrist legend, a priest (*Prespiter cristianus*) baptizes Synagoga (depicted as a bearded, male figure) in a large tub under the inscription: "*Hic baptizatur sinagoga novissimis temporibus ad Christum conversa*" (fol. 242v).[65] By twice including imagery of Synagoga's baptism, Herrad forcefully reiterates to her audience that in the final days the Jews will convert, despite their error and disbelief at the moment of the Crucifixion.

Herrad seems to have found Biblical scripture, exegetical works, and existing visual imagery insufficient to convey her opinions. Instead she drew upon and embellished these elements to create a personalized textual and pictorial composite that insists upon the creation of "dynamic progressions," to borrow a phrase from Herbert Kessler,[66] in the minds of her nuns, provoking them, in encountering this remarkable work, to generate multiple, perhaps even conflicting, apprehensions. In fact, no other extant image intertwines these two Biblical contexts to the extent seen here in the *Hortus deliciarum*, and I imagine that the richly layered meanings of this illumination would have not been accessible without the guidance of a *magistra*, for instance, through the processes of reading, accretion, discussion, and memory. Also notable is that Herrad creates multiple fissures, breaks in the Biblical citations to direct the reader's attention from one side to the other of the cross, from the side of the blessed, Ecclesia, Mary, and the Good Thief, to the Damned, with Synagoga, and the sponge-bearer, across the page and back again. The effect of reading back and forth across the pictorial space might have been similar to experiencing a dramatic reenactment

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im Mittelalter: Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Kunst des Mittelalters, ed. Reiner Haussherr (Berlin: Mann Verlag, 1993), p. 87.

[65] These ideas are elaborated in Jeremy Cohen, "*Synagoga conversa*: Honorius Augustodunensis, the Song of Songs, and Christianity's 'Eschatological Jew,'" *Speculum* 79 (2004), 309–340. For a discussion of Antichrist imagery in the *Hortus*, see Rosemary Muir Wright, *Art and Antichrist in Medieval Europe* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1995), pp. 78–89.

[66] Herbert Kessler, "Turning a Blind Eye: Medieval Art and the Dynamics of Contemplation," in *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, eds. Anne-Marie Bouché and Jeffrey F. Hamburger (Princeton: University of Princeton Press, 2006), p. 414. All the essays in this compendium offer a reconsideration of the processes of seeing and thinking in medieval art. On the influence of response theory in medieval art history, see Jonathan J.G. Alexander, "Art History, Literary History, and the Study of Medieval Illuminated Manuscripts," *Studies in Iconography* 18 (1997), pp. 51–66.

of the Crucifixion. At the very least, the inscriptions amplified the dramatic potential of the Song of Songs and stimulated a multi-sensory encounter. Herrad's repeated use of the dialogic tropes in the Calvary and *rotae* miniatures could be manifestations of the oral environment in which the *Hortus* was handled and experienced, her book itself an audio-visual event in which many of the inscribed pictures are instigators of virtual performances.[67] The splitting of the texts might also be considered a pictorial equivalent of the Latin admonishment, *Hic lege*, one finds throughout the *Hortus*' texts, a forceful cue to the reader to pay close attention and to look, to think anew.

Conclusion

To conclude this essay, I return to the *Hortus*', beginning, to Herrad's prose introduction in which she describes herself as "a little bee inspired by God," moving among flowers to harvest sacred nectar. Griffiths has already sharpened our understanding of this metaphor, tracing its roots within the classical tradition of Seneca, who uses the bee as a symbol for creative composition, for the cognitive procedures of making.[68] It is not just the abbess, however, who creates new material. Significantly, she also envisions her sisters as beelike, "faithfully working at Hohenbourg as though in the vineyard of the Lord Christ." Herrad is not the only person who labors in the service of the *Hortus deliciarum*—the book requires a reciprocal effort of listening, meditating, reading, discussing, and digesting. Working alongside Herrad, her sisters now must transform the nectar Herrad offers them into the honey of heavenly salvation. This sentiment in fact brings the book to a close, and launches its potential efficacy into a perpetual future. On the manuscript's final facing pages (fols. 323v and 324r), just after the group portrait of the Hohenbourg community, Herrad includes a poem referring to her sisters as little bees who drink "the clear nectar of the Scriptures," and who, Herrad hopes, will continue their studies and their engagement with the *Hortus*: "May they drink now, may

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[67] Michael Curschmann, "Epistemological Perspectives at the Juncture of Word and Image in Medieval Books Before 1300," in *Multi-media Compositions From the Middle Ages to the Early Modern Period*, ed. Margriet Hoogvliet (Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2004), pp. 1–14.

[68] Griffiths, *The Garden of Delights*, pp. 91–107.

they drink in the future, May they live now and always, may they all live eternally."[69]

Here a profitable comparison can be made with the design and reception of the *Bibles moralisées*, lavishly decorated manuscripts made for members of the French royal court during the first part of the thirteenth century. With multiple roundels virtually brimming with figurative detail and each accompanied by textual descriptions, these folios confound any search for easy or fixed meanings. The design of the *Bibles* is "formal but not formalized," presenting text and image as starting points for discussion.[70] For despite their didactic nature and orderly compositional system of portraying Biblical typologies, the ways in which the pictorial and textual information could be comprehended remain unregulated. Even with a clerical advisor, the viewer is invited to construct meanings and readings from the juxtaposition of the text and image, generating, in essence, multiple sermons. In a compelling discussion of how the authors and artists of the moralized Bibles used rhetorical conventions to structure their readers' experiences, Christopher Hughes expands our idea of the limits of imaginative responses to these ambitious, didactic manuscripts.[71] Herrad of Hohenbourg went to similarly extraordinary lengths to create her book, and it makes sense that she would choose the captivating over the prosaic. The pictorial arrangements of the *rotae* diagrams and the Calvary folio feature symmetry and order, and the texts were likewise selected or composed with calculated pedagogical rationale. Once in the hands and minds of its audience, however, the *Hortus* initiates entire networks of meanings. What to us might seem as ambiguities or inconsistencies should probably instead be embraced as Herrad's

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[69] *Nectar clarum scripturarum, Potant liberaliter, Bibant, bibant, vivant, vivant, Omnes eternaliter*. Latin and translation from Griffiths, *The Garden of Delights*, pp. 236, 238. The author of this poem (*Rithmus de monte Hohenburc*) is a certain Conrad of Hohenbourg (*Hohenburgensibus Conradus*). His involvement in the production of the *Hortus deliciarum* evidence of interaction between male and female members of religious orders during the end of the reform period. *Ibid*., pp. 80, 106–107.

[70] John Lowden, "'Reading' Images and Texts in the *Bibles moralisées*," in *Reading Images and Texts: Medieval Images and Texts as Forms of Communication, Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy* 8, eds. Mariëlle Hageman and Marco Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), p. 515.

[71] Christopher Hughes, "Typology and Its Uses in the Moralized Bible," in *The Mind's Eye*, eds. Bouché and Hamburger, pp. 133–150. His treatment of a Crucifixion roundel as an example of hyperbole (magnified, exaggerated) compared to its pair of the Sacrifice of Isaac, is especially relevant to the *Hortus*' Crucifixion illumination.

Fig. 2.8 *"Different kinds of shoes from the miniatures of the Hortus deliciarum,"* Drawing executed by Comte d'Auguste Bastard *c.* 1840. Photo: Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

Fig. 2.9 *Tracings from miniatures in the Hortus deliciarum*. Photo: Le Grand Séminaire de Strasbourg.

conscious efforts to produce or at least allow for the production of multiple implications in the minds of her Hohenbourgian sisters.

In this last respect, then, it is perhaps fitting, that the sole traces of this astonishing, twelfth-century manuscript are nineteenth-century drawings and tracings. (figs. 2.8, 2.9) Herrad's book remains fragmentary, each modern sheet a form of response, however distant, to a lost medieval narrative. Viewed today, these images remain unwitting agents in the very process of reception this essay has argued for within the *Hortus*, one in which give and take, indeterminacy between word, image, and viewer is assumed. Rather than instating a limiting program of symbolism, the extraordinary *Hortus deliciarum* engages the many delights of discourse and echoes one of the avenues of scholarship open to twelfth-century women.

3. TURNING THE PAGES: MARGINAL NARRATIVES AND DEVOTIONAL PRACTICE IN GOTHIC PRAYERBOOKS

Anne Rudloff Stanton

The texts of many medieval prayerbooks were surrounded by a web of imagery intended, at least in part, to strengthen the potency of the reader's devotional experience.[1] Our eyes are drawn initially to the elaborately-framed miniatures that so often decorate modern calendars and notecards, but also to the images appearing inside historiated initials, woven into border decoration, or placed altogether outside the texts and borders. Modern viewers have tended to weight the construction of meaning for these images according to their placement, perceiving the miniatures as most important, while those located in other areas, particularly in the margins, are given less attention. Recent scholarship has shaped a new understanding of such "images on the edge" by examining margins as sites for creative wordplay and glossing, perfectly suited to the intimate relationship each reader seems to have been intended to have with his or her book.[2]

But little of this scholarship has addressed the divergent dynamic of the narrative sequences that appear in marginal sites in several Gothic manuscripts.[3] Such sequences occur primarily in the bottom margins

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[1] Among the many studies examining the relationships between the function and decoration of prayerbooks, two recent examples appropriate to this essay are Alexa Sand, "Vision, Devotion, and Difficulty in the Psalter Hours 'of Yolande of Soissons,'" *Art Bulletin* 87 (2005), 6–23, and Richard K. Emmerson, "A 'Large Order of the Whole': Intertextuality and Interpictoriality in the Hours of Isabella Stuart," *Studies in Iconography* 28 (2007), 51–110. I thank Laura Gelfand for calling my attention to this article.

[2] Michael Camille, *Image on the Edge: The Margins of Medieval Art* (London: Reaktion Books, 1992); Lucy Freeman Sandler, "The Study of Marginal Imagery: Past, Present, and Future," *Studies in Iconography* 18 (1997), pp. 1–49. More recently, see Laura Kendrick, "Making Sense of Marginalized Images in Manuscripts and Religious Architecture," in *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe*, ed. Conrad Rudolph, *Blackwell Companions to Art History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), pp. 274–94.

[3] Most scholarship on these narrative sequences has occurred in the context of studies focused on specific manuscripts, such as Jessica Brantley's "Images of the Vernacular in the Taymouth Hours," *Decoration and Illustration in Medieval English Manuscripts*, *English Manuscript Studies* 1100–1700, 10 (London: British Library, 2002),

of these manuscripts, either anchored to the horizontal extension of a bar border or floating below the text block, but at times they also wind through historiated initials or miniatures, carrying the eye of the viewer through various sectors of the page. (figs. 3.1, 3.6) It is important to note here that this kind of marginal image is so tightly integrated into the illustrative and decorative systems of these manuscripts that the term 'marginal' is misleading. This essay will nevertheless continue to use the term as an alternative to *bas-de-page*, which denotes specifically the area below the bottom of the text block.[4]

Narrative or episodic sequences appear in the marginal spaces of several manuscripts illuminated in England and France in the later thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[5] In a group of English prayerbooks they occur on nearly every folio, drawing the viewer from one page to the next through the potency of their storytelling. These scenes do not illustrate the Latin prayers, although in many cases careful study unveils connections to nearby words.[6] Rather, their narrative connections provide a visual focus that, for the lay patrons for whom most of these books were made, may have been of more immediate interest than the prayers themselves. This essay begins to explore these sequences by examining the ways in which they draw a viewer from page to page, beyond the heavily-decorated *incipit* pages that signal the

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pp. 83–113. For a broader view, see C.M. Kauffmann's short section on "Innovation: Narrative Illustration in the Lower Margin or the Exploitation of the 'Bas-de-page'" in his *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England 700–1550* (London: Harvey Miller Press, 2003), pp. 211–15, and for marginalia in psalters specifically, F.O. Büttner, "Der illuminierte Psalter im Westen," *The Illuminated Psalter: Studies in the content, purpose and placement of its images,* ed. F.O. Büttner (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 92–99.

[4] Brantley, "Images of the Vernacular," p. 84.

[5] The manuscripts discussed in this essay are the core of the early fourteenth-century examples; later English manuscripts include the *Carew-Poyntz Horae* (Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 48, mid-fourteenth-century with fifteenth-century additions) and two of the manuscripts made for the Bohun family in the later fourteenth century. See Lucy Freeman Sandler, *The Lichtenthal Psalter and the Manuscript Patronage of the Bohun Family* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2004), pp. 119–122. Such sequences appear throughout the Gothic period; see for example Emmerson's study of "marginal" narratives in a 15th-century French manuscript in "A 'Large Order of the Whole.'"

[6] Anne Rudloff Stanton, "The Psalter of Isabelle of France, Queen of England 1308–1330: Isabelle as the Audience," *Word & Image* 18 (2002), pp. 1–27. Kauffmann, *Biblical Imagery*, p. 212, emphasized the independence of the *bas-de-page* narratives from the devotional texts, but connections with individual words, exegetical or sermon-based interpretations, and indeed other images on the page, can weave a tight connection.

start of each text section, into the textual wildernesses of subsequent pages.

My working hypothesis is that narrative marginal sequences were intended to transform the Latin prayers into contemporary page-turners. Psalters in particular may have been in need of such transformation; their ancient and non-narrative texts were more suited to study and contemplation than to contemporary affective modes of lay piety.[7] The psalms, however, were at the core of much liturgical and educational experience—in both Latin and vernacular literature—and thus would have been committed to the memory of a pious reader, potentially turning the text of a psalter into a series of mnemonic keywords.[8] Modern understanding of the use of these prayerbooks is further complicated by the suggestion, in some medieval devotional literature, that one's attention should be focused on the end to which the prayer was directed, rather than the correct reading or pronunciation of the words of the prayer.[9] Indeed, the lay users of many prayerbooks may have read their devotional texts "by viewing pages of text as images, by gazing intently upon the icon-like sacred imagery and words…." rather than by decoding the words themselves.[10] In this devotional environment, then, the role played by visual narrative sequences becomes more important, for such serial imagery might well have provided the primary momentum for moving through a prayerbook.

While there is a substantial and growing body of secondary literature on medieval visuality, this essay is predicated on the well-attested theory that for medieval viewers, the object (or image) played an active

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[7] Anne Rudloff Stanton, *The Queen Mary Psalter: a Study of Affect and Audience* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 2001), pp. 58–70; Sand, "Vision, Devotion, and Difficulty," *passim*.

[8] Rosemary Muir Wright, "Introducing the Medieval Psalter," in eds. B. Cassidy and R.M. Wright, *Studies in the Illustration of the Psalter* (Stamford: Shaun Tyus, 2000), pp. 1–11. Michael P. Kuczynski, *Prophetic Song: The Psalms as Moral Discourse in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), and Adelaide Bennett, "The Transformation of the Gothic Psalter in Thirteenth-Century France" in ed. F.O. Büttner, *The Illuminated Psalter: Studies in the content, purpose and placement of its images* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 211–21, explore the emphasis on the psalms as penitential texts in the later medieval period.

[9] Paul Saenger, "Books of Hours and the Readings Habits of the Later Middle Ages," *Scrittura e civiltà* 9 (1985), pp. 255–56.

[10] Don C. Skemer, *Binding Words: Textual Amulets in the Middle Ages* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006), p. 272; Emmerson addresses this as well in "A 'Large Order of the Whole,'" p. 54.

role in the act of viewing. The Aristotelian and Arabic texts that shaped later medieval optical theory held that objects are visible because they emit rays that enter our brains through our eyes.[11] As Suzannah Biernoff noted in her study of medieval visuality, viewer and object were physically connected in a way, as the two poles in this transaction of vision.[12] Thus, simple visual contact with this activated sacred page would have provided a spiritual benefit that did not depend on decoding the text. Because the individual scenes often are so small, a viewer must be quite close to see them and discern the details that move the narrative, and this close range may also have intensified the devotional benefit of the prayers.[13] The narrative details not only pull the viewer closer, making what was already a personal reading experience even more intimate, they also encourage them to move on to the next scene, and the next page. The attractiveness of the stories may well have been used in this fashion to deepen viewers' physical exposure to the prayers, thus increasing the efficacy of the prayerbooks.

The juxtaposition of Latin prayers with images that do not appear to illustrate them, yet compete with them for the reader's attention, has long been an issue of interest in manuscript scholarship, much of it clustered around the humorous or profane marginalia mentioned earlier.[14] Yet the inclusion of narrative imagery was popular in thirteenth-century psalters, primarily in the form of full-page prefatory illuminations that provided pictorial Biblical histories.[15] Many of these cycles showed the influence of Biblical commentaries, like the *Historia Scholastica* of Peter Comestor (d. 1178), that drew upon a variety of sources to fill out the narrative details that were so sparse in canonical Biblical texts.[16] The varied narrative systems in the manu-

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[11] The medieval understanding of the process, and its effect on the visual arts, is lucidly explored in Kathryn H. Tachau, "Seeing as Action and Passion in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," in eds. J. Hamburger and A.-M. Bouché, *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 336–59.

[12] In *Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages* (New York: Palgrave Press, 2002), p. 102.

[13] It seems clear that proximity was the monosodium glutamate of late medieval devotion, an extra ingredient that intensified the experience; see Skemer, *Binding Words*, pp. 268–78.

[14] See note 2 above.

[15] See Kauffmann, *Biblical Imagery in Medieval England*, pp. 114–60, for an overview.

[16] For the *Historia Scholastica* itself see J.P. Migne, *Patrologiae Latinae Cursus Completus*, (1855), vol. 198, pp. 1049–1722. Nigel Morgan, "Old Testament Illustration in Thirteenth-Century England," in (ed.) B.S. Levy, *The Bible in the Middle Ages: Its*

scripts discussed in this essay differ from these earlier prayerbooks in two ways: the careful interweaving of the visual narratives with the Latin prayers, and the incorporation of non-Biblical materials that range from bestiary stories to contemporary romances. In each of them, intertextual and interpictorial relationships create a dynamic structure that appears to have been carefully calibrated to the needs of the individual user.

Four Manuscripts: Dating and Patronage

The four books discussed in this essay are among the most beautiful examples of English Gothic illumination: the *Isabella Psalter*, the *Tickhill Psalter*, the *Queen Mary Psalter*, and the *Taymouth Hours*.[17] These manuscripts fall into two groups in terms of their design strategies and their chronology. The *Isabella* and *Tickhill Psalters* were produced in the first decade of the fourteenth century; both D.D. Egbert and Lucy Freeman Sandler noted that the artist of the first also helped create the second, and indeed the *Isabella Psalter* was initially published as "a sister to the Tickhill Psalter."[18] Although overall page designs differ, similarities include painting style, certain design motifs,

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Influence on Literature and Art (Binghamton, NY: Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1992), pp. 150–97, and more recently Stahl, *Picturing Kingship*, pp. 154–61, for perspective on the French tradition that would have informed Isabella of France, in whose orbit three of the manuscripts under discussion were produced. For more on the broader influence of the *Historia Scholastica*, see James H. Morey, "Peter Comestor, Biblical Paraphrase, and the Medieval Popular Bible," *Speculum* 68 (1993), pp. 6–35.

[17] These manuscripts, with relevant bibliography, are included in Lucy Freeman Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts 1285–1385, A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles* 5 (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1986), 2 vols. For the Isabella Psalter (Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cod. gall. 16), see Sandler, cat. No. 27 and Stanton, "Psalter of Isabelle of France;" for the *Tickhill Psalter* (New York, New York Public Library, MS Spencer 26); Sandler, cat. No. 26 and *The Splendor of the Word: Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts at the New York Public Library*, (eds.) Jonathan J.G. Alexander *et al* (New York and London: The New York Public Library and Harvey Miller Publishers, 2005), pp. 201–207; for the *Queen Mary Psalter* (London, British Library, MS Royal 2.B.vii) see Sandler, cat. No. 56, George Warner, *Queen Mary's Psalter* (London: The British Museum, 1912) and Stanton, *Queen Mary Psalter*; for the *Taymouth Hours* (London, British Library, MS Yates Thompson 13), see Sandler, cat. No. 98, Brantley, "Images of the Vernacular," and the forthcoming study by Kathryn A. Smith.

[18] D.D. Egbert, *The Tickhill Psalter and Related Manuscripts* (New York and Princeton: New York Public Library and Princeton University, 1940), p. 82; Sandler, *Splendor of the Word*, 204; for the earlier publication see Egbert, "A Sister to the

and the linked use of historiated initials and *bas-de-page* stages to present an Old Testament narrative. (figs. 3.1, 3.2) The *Queen Mary Psalter* and the *Taymouth* Hours belong to the years around 1320–1330, and in both of these manuscripts the figural decoration is presented in framed illuminations as well as historiated initials and *bas-de-page* scenes, although the narrative threads in the three areas may be separate or interwoven. (figs. 3.3, 3.4) While these two prayerbooks are not as closely related by artistic style as the two earlier psalters, they share similarities in the encyclopedic nature of their subject matter and, perhaps, stem from the same patronage context.[19]

The *Isabella Psalter*, the *Taymouth Hours* and the *Queen Mary Psalter* were very likely produced for or used in the orbit of Isabella of France (*c*. 1295–1358), who was the queen of England from 1308 until her forcible retirement in 1330. The daughter of Philip IV (1268–1314) and sister of the last three Capetian rulers of France, Isabella was officially betrothed to Edward of Carnarvon in 1303 and married in 1308, bracketing a period that agrees with the date of the *Isabella Psalter* as proposed by Egbert and Sandler.[20] Because of this, the *Isabella Psalter* has been understood as a gift to the queen, in part because it includes an initial depicting a crowned queen kneeling between the arms of England and France.[21] The *Queen Mary Psalter*'s painting style suggests a date in the second decade of the fourteenth century, and arguments about its relationship to Isabella's court rest primarily on aspects of its iconography and design, including similarities to both the *Isabella Psalter* and the *Taymouth Hours*.[22] The latter manuscript, which has been dated by painting style to the years around 1330, depicts a crowned woman in four images, and certain aspects of its iconography and page design also suggest a connection with Isabella.[23] At the time it was produced the crowned woman depicted could have been intended to represent any one of three queens: Isabella; her daughter-in-law Philippa

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Tickhill Psalter: the Psalter of Queen Isabella of England," *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 39 (1935), pp. 759–88.

[19] Anne Rudloff Stanton, "Isabelle of France and her Manuscripts, 1308–1358" in (ed.) Kathleen Nolan, *Capetian Women* (New York: Palgrave Press, 2003), pp. 225–52.

[20] Alison Weir, *Queen Isabella: Treachery, Adultery, and Murder in Medieval England* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2005). For the dating of the Psalter, see Sandler, *Splendor of the Word*, p. 204.

[21] This image appears on fol. 94; see Stanton, "Psalter of Isabelle," fig. 1.

[22] Stanton, *Queen Mary Psalter*, pp. 209–244.

[23] For the date, see Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts,* vol. 2, p. 109 (cat. No. 98). For the connections with Isabella see Stanton, "Isabelle of France," pp. 225–52, especially pp. 243–45.

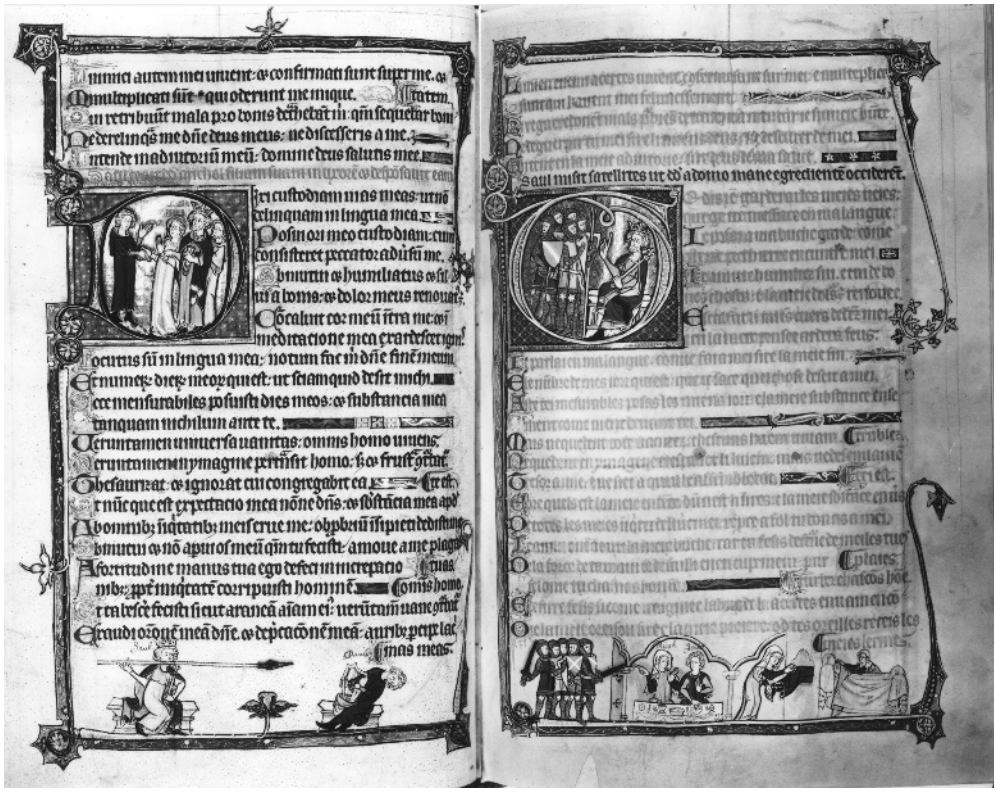

Fig. 3.1 *Isabella Psalter*, Psalm 38, fols. 35v–36: David marries Michal, who saves him from Saul. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cod. gall. 16, *c.* 1303–*c.* 1308, 285 × 200 mm. Photo: by permission of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München.

of Hainault (1311–69), who married Edward III (1312–77) early in 1328 but was not crowned queen until 1330; and Isabella's daughter Joan of the Tower (1321–62), who married King David of Scotland (1324–71) in the same year, at the age of six.[24] Kathryn Smith has argued that the crowned figure may represent a princess rather than a queen—Isabella's other daughter Eleanor of Woodstock (1318–55), who married the Count of Guelders in 1332.[25] While it is unlikely that the identity of this crowned figure will ever be settled beyond a doubt,

[24] For this attribution, see Loveday Lewes Gee, *Women, Art and Patronage from Henry III to Edward III: 1216–1377* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002), pp. 49–50.

[25] Kathryn A. Smith, "City and Court: The Origins and Owner of the Taymouth Hours (London, BL Yates Thompson MS 13)," paper presented at the 34th Annual Saint Louis Conference on Manuscript Studies, October 12, 2007.

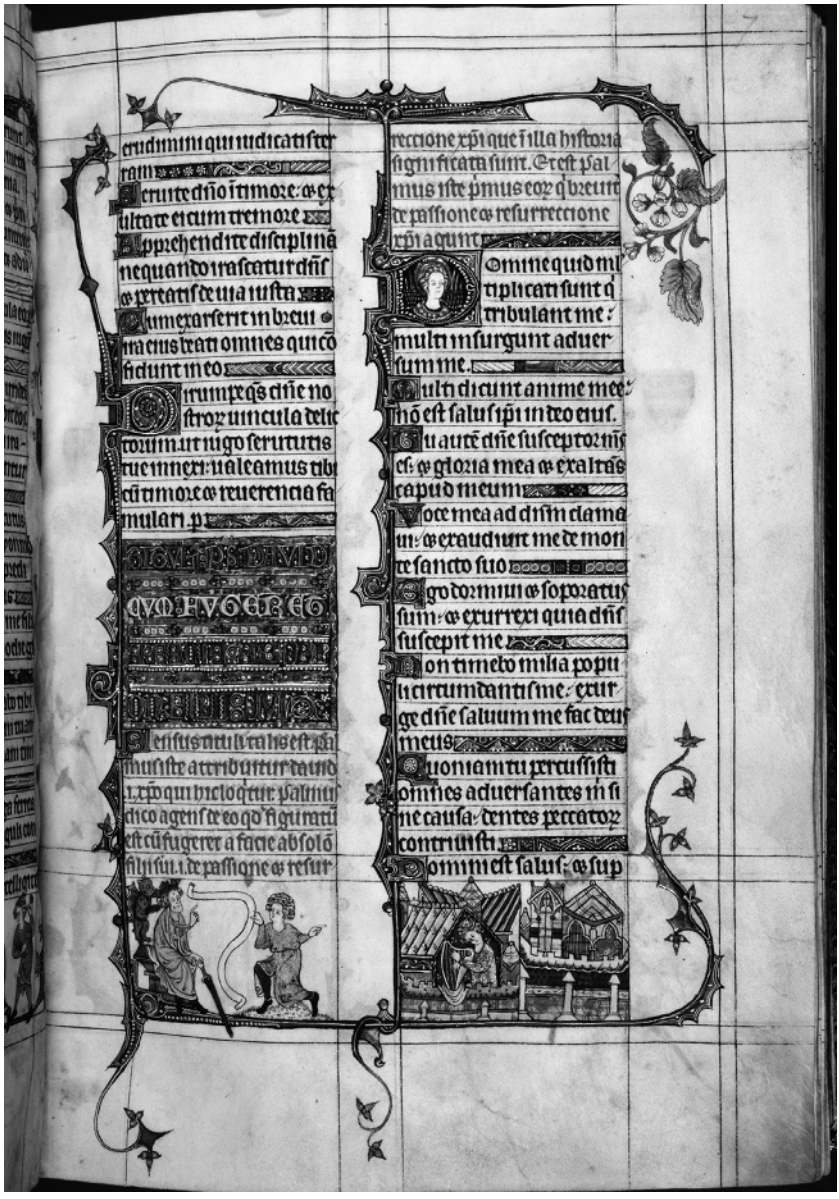

Fig. 3.2 *Tickhill Psalter*, Psalm 3, fol. 7: David is called to Saul and plays for him. New York: The New York Public Library, MS Spencer 26, *c.* 1303–*c.* 1314, 326 × 222 mm. Photo: by permission of the New York Public Library, New York.

Fig. 3.3 *Queen Mary Psalter*, Psalm 26, fol. 112v: Adoration of the Magi; David touches his eyes; the Weasel. London, British Library, MS Royal 2B.vii, *c.* 1310–*c.* 1320, 277 × 175 mm. Photo: by permission of the British Library Board, London.

Fig. 3.4 *Taymouth Hours*, Psalm 119, fol. 139: Supplicant; separation of blessed and damned. London, British Library, MS Yates Thompson 13, *c.* 1325–*c.* 1335, 168 × 110 mm. Photo: by permission of the British Library Board, London.

the general patronage context of the manuscript is clearly royal and connected in some way to the orbit of Isabella.

While the *Taymouth Hours* represents a different kind of book type, the *Tickhill Psalter* is the only manuscript in our group that includes an inscription naming its original patron. According to a fifteenth-century inscription on fol. 1, the *Tickhill Psalter* was written and gilded by John Tickhill (fl. 1303–15), who was removed from office as prior of the Augustinian priory in Worksop, Nottinghamshire, in 1314.[26] While it has been suggested that little credence can be placed in this inscription,[27] the unusual and scholarly two-column design of the Psalter and its unique combination of commentary and psalm texts indeed suggest a clerical audience rather than a noble, female one.[28]

Despite their differences, these four books form a representative core group of manuscripts, each of which provides a different approach to the design of a visual narrative framework. As the charts in the appendix show, designs vary from the fully-illustrated approach of the *Isabella Psalter*, in which a single narrative is pursued in historiated initials that appear at the start of every psalm and in marginal scenes at the foot of every page of Latin psalms, (fig. 3.1) to the more episodic program in the *bas-de-page* of the *Queen Mary Psalter*, a collection of marginal sequences more analogous to an anthology of short stories than a long epic. (fig. 3.3) The following pages will investigate the ways in which the design of the narrative sequences in these manuscripts may have pulled their readers closer to the Latin prayers, and then pushed them to keep turning the pages.

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[26] Sandler, *Splendor of the Word*, 201. She also repeats Egbert's suggestion that the financial problems leading to Tickhill's removal from office were caused by the substantial expenses incurred in the making of the Psalter, which was left unfinished; see his *Tickhill Psalter*, pp. 6–7.

[27] See Dorothy Miner's excellent review of Egbert, *Tickhill Psalter*, in the *American Journal of Archaeology* 47 (1943), pp. 513–18, particularly p. 517.

[28] Sandler, *Splendor of the Word*, p. 204. Another contemporary ornate psalter that demonstrates the two-column format is the *Peterborough Psalter* (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS 9961–62, *c.* 1300–18), created for Geoffrey of Crowland, the Abbot of Peterborough, and given by him in 1318 to Cardinal Gaucelin d'Euse, the papal nuncio to England; see Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts*, no. 18, and *idem, The Peterborough Psalter in Brussels and Other Fenland Manuscripts* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 1974).

The Isabella Psalter

The *Isabella Psalter* may be the earliest of the manuscripts under discussion here, and is the most typical example of English psalter design.[29] (figs. 3.1, 3.5) Such psalters were the primary devotional texts in England until late in the medieval period. The structure of lay psalm use was adapted from clerical use in which the 150 psalms were divided into sections to enable a complete reading over the course of a week. English psalters of the late thirteenth century typically divided the psalms into ten sections (at Psalms 1, 26, 38, 51, 52, 68, 80, 97, 101, and 109), with additional prayers, including the Canticles and Litany.[30] The text is usually presented in a single column, and the psalms and verses are marked by a hierarchy of initials. In the *Isabella Psalter*, this hierarchy consists of historiated initials of six to eight lines that separate the 150 psalms into ten sections.[31] This manuscript contains additional decoration in the form of smaller historiated initials, of three to five lines, that mark the beginning of each psalm within those divisions. A bar border along the left margin of each verso continues into the bottom margin, where it provides the ground line for a scene that continues the story told in the initials that begin each psalm. The historiated initials and the *bas-de-scenes* were clearly linked in the mind of the designer, for if the text has no historiated initials, the *bas-de-page* of that folio is left blank.

The linguistic, decorative and illustrative scheme of the verso and recto of each folio differs, which is another feature that distinguishes the *Isabella Psalter* from contemporary psalters. On the left side of each opening the psalms are written in a dark brown ink in Latin, and punctuated by initials and marginalia depicting scenes from the Old Testament, all connected by the bar borders and scrollwork mentioned above. On the right side of the opening, however, the same psalms are

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[29] Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts*, vol. II, p. 34. See for comparison her cat. no. 35: a psalter illuminated in England *c.* 1300, now Princeton, Princeton University Library, MS Garrett 35.

[30] The divisions used depended on chronology and geography; see Robert Calkins, *Illuminated Books of the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), pp. 207–09; Wright, "Introducing the Medieval Psalter," *passim.*

[31] Egbert, *Tickhill Psalter*, p. 155, believed that the psalms here were divided into the eight groupings more typical of contemporary French psalters, but his careful documentation of missing folios shows that there would have been ample room for larger historiated initials at psalms 51 and 101, making the psalm layout more typical of English psalters. See Stanton, "Psalter of Isabelle," p. 4.

written in a red ink and are in Anglo-Norman French, a translation of the Latin Psalms into the vernacular language of the English and French nobility. For the most part, the decorative scheme on the vernacular side is simpler, and non-narrative. Each psalm is announced by a two-line initial that is either decorative or depicts the heraldic emblem of important English and Continental families; these initials are not linked by any border. The bottom margins of the first sixty-four folios are occupied by bestiary scenes that float in the bas-de-page with no decorative connection to the texts above, making the distinction between the Latin and French pages, the Biblical and vernacular scenes, apparent at a glance. (fig. 3.5) There are, however, interpictorial and intertextual connections between the psalms, the Biblical scenes, and the bestiary scenes, some of which have been explored elsewhere.[32] Openings marking the major divisions of both the Latin and French psalms are fully dedicated to scenes from the life of King David, with historiated initials and marginalia on both sides of each opening that all play a part in the same narrative thread.[33] (fig. 3.1) The chronology of this sequence follows the longer Old-Testament narrative depicted throughout the ordinary psalms, with some overlap. (Appendix, Chart I)

The bilingual psalms of the *Isabella Psalter* are thus nestled within three competing sequences, each of which follows its own internal logic. The bestiary sequence was based on a known rescension of the source text, and the David narrative of the main divisions, despite the biographical organization and focus on personal aspects—marriages, old age—rather than political or martial iconography, fits into a tradition of using David imagery at these sites.[34] The broader Old-Testament sequence also plays a traditional role in providing the

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[32] See Stanton, "Psalter of Isabelle," *passim.*

[33] The majority of missing folios cluster around the major *incipits*, so it is harder to see the direction of the narrative in this part of the sequence.

[34] Stanton, "Psalter of Isabelle," pp. 4–5, 9–10; Willene Clark and Meradith McMunn, eds., *Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), p. 199. Many contemporary historiated initial sequences focus on David, either in the most common series of word-pictures acting out the start of the psalms, or more one-off series like the initials that set off the major divisions in the *Psalter of Louis IX* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS Lat. 10525, *c.* 1270), made for Isabella's great-grandfather. See Harvey Stahl, *Picturing Kingship: History and Painting in the Psalter of Saint Louis* (College Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), p. 217 for a description of these initials.

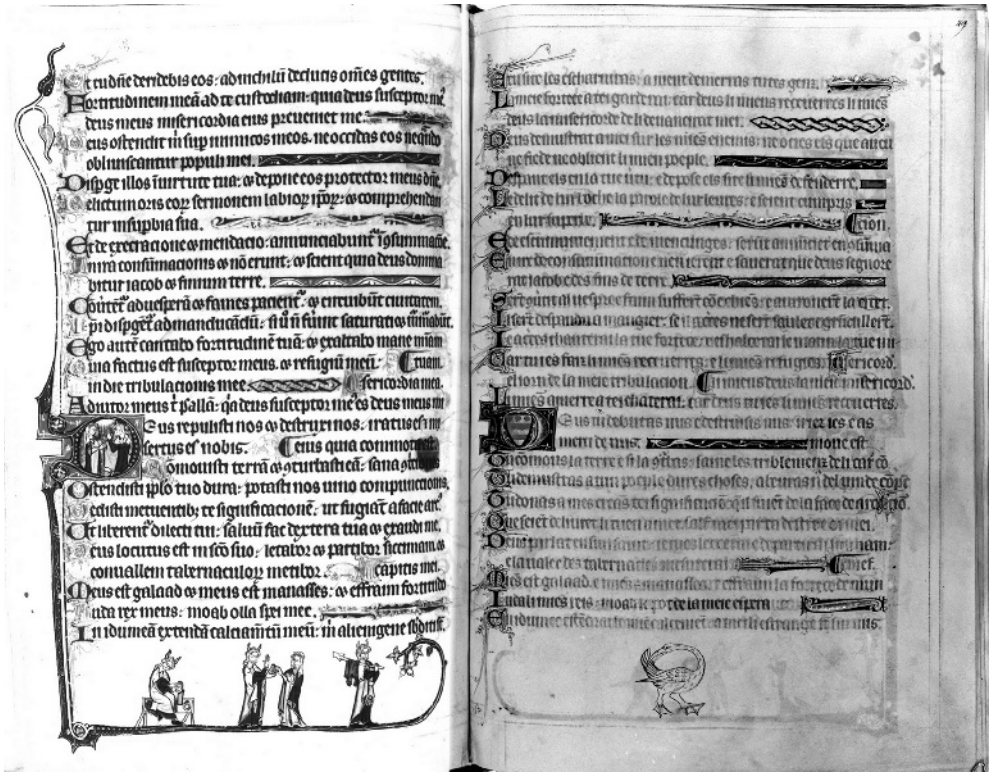

Fig. 3.5 *Isabella Psalter*, Psalm 59, fols. 48v–49: Moses, Tharbis, and the Ring of Forgetfulness; the Halcyon. Photo: by permission of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, München.

historical framework for David's life and for the psalm texts.[35] And all of these sequences come together in what Richard Emmerson has called a "complex visual whole" that pulled the intended reader of the manuscript, Isabella of France, into the structure of the pictorial narrative and also through the textual devotions.[36]

There are over 250 surviving scenes in this sequence, and there may have been as many as forty more historiated initials and marginal paintings on the folios that are now missing.[37] This extensive

[35] See Stahl, *Picturing Kingship*, pp. 154–61, for a clear discussion of the relationship between psalters and Old Testament history.

[36] Emmerson, "A 'Large Order of the Whole'," p. 54.

[37] The surviving scenes and missing folios are identified in Egbert, *Tickhill Psalter*, Appendix II and confirmed by personal examination.

Old Testament saga was carefully salted with episodes that would have engaged the interests of the young queen, many of which were based on the Biblical narrative of the *Historia Scholastica* rather than the canonical texts.[38] A large percentage of the scenes depict female characters, particularly mothers, and the attention given to Sarah, Hannah, and Bathsheba is accompanied by the inclusion of women rarely seen in Gothic art, like Hagar, the concubine of Abraham and mother of Ishmael, and Tharbis, the Ethiopian princess Moses married before he met Zipporah.[39] (fig. 3.5)

Since at least two scenes from the Old Testament epic appear on nearly every opening, placed within and around the Latin psalm text that faces the French translation, the viewer's eye is consistently led into the Latin psalms as the visual narrative is followed. The relatively crowded text block ensures that the outer dimensions of the regular historiated initials are fairly small—around twenty-five millimeters or an inch in height—and the scene within is even smaller. The marginal scenes are only slightly larger in scale. Since there are no original captions, the eyes of the reader must be pulled close to the images in order to decode their subject matter, thus bringing them closer to the psalm texts as well. The larger initials and more complex page design of the major *incipits* provided a unified narrative to the casual viewer, thumbing through the manuscript looking for the prettiest pages. But the narrative design and *mise-en-page* of the ordinary psalms might also have attracted this casual reader to these less heavily-decorated pages, and thus pulled their eyes beyond the beautiful *incipits* toward the road less traveled—the verse after verse of psalm readings that, required in monastic use, were perhaps too time-consuming for a busy noblewoman.

There are many possible reasons for the manuscript's designer to have created this dense pictorial narrative. As I noted above, Biblical narratives were very fashionable in this period; indeed, the recent ancestors of Isabella of France had commissioned some of the most famous French examples.[40] A royal reader in particular would have

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[38] See above, n. 16, for more on the *Historia Scholastica.* For the suitability of the Psalter's stories for their young audience, see Stanton, "Psalter of Isabelle," *passim*.

[39] Stanton, "Psalter of Isabelle," and *idem*, "Tharbis and the Ring of Forgetfulness: Design and Devotional Practice in the Isabella Psalter in Munich," in progress.

[40] See note 14 above; for the French context see Stahl, *Picturing Kingship*, and Daniel Weiss, *Art and Crusade in the Age of Saint Louis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

been encouraged to see herself within the Biblical stories, particularly those that emphasized the Old-Testament women who were the wives and mothers of rulers, such as Michal, Bathsheba, and Hannah. (fig. 3.1) Isabella's emotional engagement with these stories may have been heightened by the designer's attention to narrative detail, such as the depiction of the scene where Moses, eager to return to Egypt, gives his Ethiopian wife, Tharbis, a ring that will make her forget him.[41] (fig. 3.5) Interpictorial elements are at play here as well, linking varying elements within this opening with absent images and texts. The centrally-positioned and enlarged ring Moses offers his wife is repeated in the shape of the 'D' initial that, a few lines above, frames a preceding episode where Tharbis grasps Moses' cloak, begging him to stay with her.[42] While Moses in this initial turns his head back over his shoulder toward Tharbis, his figure strides purposefully out of her life at the bottom right of the page, leading the viewer's eye into the border—which curls over into another near-echo of the ring shape—and into the facing page. Here the unusual pose of the Halcyon, who reaches back with her beak to grasp her tail, also echoes the ring shape and visually ties together the two pages.[43] This repeated ring-shape may have resonated with the importance placed on rings as gifts and as symbols in the rite of marriage, certainly an issue of interest for Isabella as the primary audience for this manuscript.[44]

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[41] For this apocryphal tale see Mark Balfour, "Moses and the Princess: Josephus' Antiquitates Judaicae and the chansons de geste," *Medium Aevum* 64 (1995), pp. 1–16.

[42] Emmerson, "A 'Large Order of the Whole'," discusses a similarly complex illuminated manuscript in the context of interpictoriality as developed by Cynthia Hahn in "Interpictoriality in the Limoges Chasses of Stephen, Martial, and Valerie" in (ed.) Colum Hourihane, *Image and Belief: Studies in Celebration of the Eightieth Anniversary of the Index of Christian Art* (Princeton, NJ: Index of Christian Art, Department of Art and Archaeology, and Princeton University Press, 1999), pp. 109–24. See also Hahn's compact essay on one of the chasses in "Valerie's Gift: A Narrative Enamel Chasse from Limoges" in (eds.) Elizabeth Sears and Thelma K. Thomas, *Reading Medieval Images: The Art Historian and the Object* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2002), pp. 187–200.

[43] The Halcyon is most often depicted with its nest, but the image of the bird turning its head to grasp its tail can also be found in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 764. See R. Barber, *Bestiary* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1992), p. 140. See also Florence McCulloch, *Medieval Latin and French Bestiaries* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960), p. 135.

[44] For the importance of rings in the marriage ritual, see Emma Lipton, *Affections of the Mind: the Politics of Sacramental Marriage in Late Medieval English Literature* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Indiana Press, 2007), pp. 109–10.

It is significant that the visual storytelling occurs primarily in conjunction with the Latin psalms rather than the French translation. As noted above, there is evidence that comprehending the exact text of a devotion was less important than keeping the end of one's prayer in mind, and yet the Latinity of the prayers was in itself important. The narrative episodes thus may have been intended to keep Isabella's eyes moving through the most devotionally potent prayers, despite the provision of the vernacular psalms, on the facing pages, that she may have been more likely to be able to comprehend.[45]

As Chart I (Appendix) shows, the Old-Testament narrative was designed to fall into chapters outlining the lives of the various patriarchs and heroes.[46] While the loss of folios around the major psalm divisions blurs our view of this narrative organization, the individual chapters fit within the functional Psalm divisions with some exceptions. For example, the thirty-nine scenes accompanying Psalms 1 through 25, read Monday mornings in monastic use,[47] depict in detail the book of Genesis through the story of the Tower of Babel (on fol. 24v). The major division at Psalm 26 is missing in the three folios removed at that point, but the Old Testament narrative reappears with a scene of Abraham, warned of the fate of Sodom, suggesting that his biography began after the missing David scenes at Psalm 26. The lives of Abraham and Jacob provide a tidy visual boundary for the Tuesday morning readings, including the emotionally-engaging episodes of Abraham's relationships with Sarah and Hagar, and his near-sacrifice of his son. The story of Joseph begins after the division at Psalm 38 and may have ended with a scene of the embalming of the body of Jacob in the *bas-de-page* of fol. 45v, which contains the initial of Psalm 50. The story of Moses seems to have begun after the missing incipits at Psalms 51 and 52, and, with a pause for the David scenes at the opening of Psalm 68, continued on through the end of that division. This pause in the visual biography of Moses coincides with the apocryphal tale of the finding of the tomb of Joseph on fol. 54v, which echoes the funereal iconography that ends the story Joseph on fol. 45v and forms

[45] Written in red ink, the vernacular texts may be seen to act more as rubrics intended to guide Isabella's prayers than as textual versions of the prayers themselves.

[46] Stahl, *Picturing Kingship*, pp. 150–51, discusses the development of this kind of biographical biblical narrative in the thirteenth century.

[47] Calkins, *Illuminated Books*, pp. 208–09, provides a capsule explanation of this monastic psalm schedule.

a natural break, before the dramatic events of the passage through the Red Sea on subsequent folios.

Throughout the *Isabella Psalter*, initials are often composed to give momentum to the directional thrust of the narrative. For the most part this is a left-to-right movement, mimicking the direction in which the viewer's eyes would move in reading a text. Thus, the main actor often stands to the left, facing toward the right; in cases where this movement is arrested or even reversed, the effect is to emphasize an important moment in the narrative. In the seven scenes devoted to the story of Moses in Ethiopia, he stands or sits on the left, looking toward the right, in every instance but one: the initial on fol. 48v in which Tharbis begs him to stay. (fig. 3.5) As noted above, the loss of so many folios around the main divisions makes it impossible to chart with certainty the use of composition throughout the *Psalter*. But the surviving examples of the main incipits, with their enlarged initials and their focus on David, show that there was both a visual break and a narrative pause in the broader Old-Testament story occupying the ordinary psalms. (fig. 3.1)

The use of composition, *mise-en-page*, and narrative to control the viewer's movement through a visual sequence is a common factor in the art of visual story-telling, and recent research into medieval literature suggests that manipulations of the gaze were also well-understood by contemporary readers and consumers of visual imagery.[48] But in the *Isabella Psalter* these factors may also have been intended to move the reader through a prescribed devotional path, starting and stopping the eye at specific points. Thus, in addition to drawing Isabella's eyes into and through the Latin Psalms, this use of narrative might also have controlled her passage through them. The resulting rhythm of Isabella's visual reading would thus have matched the devotional path of the psalms, as she picked up the new stories after the major divisions and, ideally, followed each one through to a pause or conclusion that coincided with the end of the prescribed Psalm reading.

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[48] See for example Kathryn A. Smith, *Art, Identity and Devotion in Fourteenth-Century England*, The British Library Studies in Medieval Culture (London and Toronto: The British Library and the University of Toronto Press, 2003), pp. 205–15. For one example of the literary approach to medieval visuality, see Sarah Stanbury, *The Visual Object of Desire in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), p. 6.

The Tickhill Psalter

The *Tickhill Psalter* is the largest and most complex of the psalters in terms of its text.[49] Because it was left unfinished, it has provided a useful window into the working procedures of the group of artists who produced it. For example, the large historiated initials that mark the major psalm divisions were painted on separate sheets of parchment and then glued onto blank folios, or into the spots left on folios with texts, apparently before the initials were drawn.[50] Although incomplete, the narrative structure of the *Tickhill Psalter* remains intact for nearly the entire length of the psalms.

As noted above, the *Tickhill Psalter*'s texts are arrayed in two columns; all of the texts, including the image captions, are in Latin. The manuscript begins with the preface to Peter Lombard's commentary on the Psalms, and each psalm is prefaced by an extract from the commentary, written in red ink and heralded by a block of gold leaf containing the *titulus*. (fig. 3.2) According to Sandler this combination of texts is unique in contemporary psalters, although there are precedents in glossed psalters from the previous century.[51] Indeed, the two-column organization of the Psalter is much more typical of large-format bibles, or historical, legal, philosophical, or encyclopedic texts.[52] This scholarly appearance, and the inclusion of the additional commentaries as well as the Latin texts that caption its visual narrative, may support the accepted connection to the Augustinian prior John Tickhill; this essay proceeds from that assumption.

One of the major differences between the two manuscripts is that only the major initials of the *Tickhill Psalter*—those marking the main psalm divisions—are historiated with narrative scenes. (Chart II, appendix) The ordinary psalm initials, of three or four lines in size, are decorated or in rare instances historiated with male heads, depicted in three-quarter view and facing the texts. (fig. 3.2) These initials are connected to bar borders that branch into gracefully-curved extensions at the top and bottom of the text blocks; each psalm verse also

[49] The external dimensions are 336 × 222 mm.
[50] Sandler, *Splendor of the Word*, p. 203.
[51] Sandler, *Splendor of the Word*, p. 204.
[52] See for example the Aristotle, *Metaphysica and Meteora* in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS. Lat. 6299, which was probably made for John de Grandisson (fl. 1327–69), bishop of Exeter. Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts* II, cat. No. 33, and *idem, Splendor of the Word*, p. 204.

receives a small, one-line decorated initial. The outer ruling lines were redrawn in ink to provide a strong, trellis-like grid for the delicate borders, which provide the stage for the tiny figures in the *bas-de-page*. These marginal vignettes are punctuated by gesticulating hands and long text scrolls, intended to hold Latin captions culled from the Bible and the *Historia Scholastica*. The tiny gesturing figures, foliage and heraldic emblems, and long whips of vegetal border extensions and text scrolls, all create a vivid pictorial quality that invites close and considered inspection, particularly at the main divisions where the decoration is considerably denser.[53] (fig. 3.6)

While the *Tickhill Psalter* presents a more complex textual and visual field than does the *Isabella Psalter*, the structure of its visual narrative is more direct because it lacks the competing episodes of the Bestiary or the recursive David story presented in the major initials in the earlier manuscript. The narrative in Prior Tickhill's manuscript begins with a visual preface—fifteen scenes from the book of Genesis, from the creation to the sacrifice of Isaac—that appears in the *bas-de-page* of the Lombard's Preface. The David sequence begins on fol. 5v, with two scenes of David with his flock that are framed at the foot of a full-page Tree of Jesse. The psalms themselves are decorated with 467 scenes from the lives of David and Solomon in scenes in various stages of completion, with spaces remaining for nearly 200 more images; the subjects of the scenes are heavily influenced by the *Historia Scholastica*.[54] The ordinary psalm initials do not carry narrative scenes, so the majority of the story is presented in the carefully framed *bas-de-page* of each column, two scenes for every page. But the narrative scenes within the large historiated initials are fully integrated into the larger narrative of the margins, and the individual scenes within these initials—often veritable multiplexes of Davidic history—are for the most part presented at the same scale as the marginal scenes.

The pattern of visual reading thus has a different rhythm than that shaped by the looped histories of the *Isabella Psalter*. In the queen's manuscript, the main psalm divisions are announced not only with enlarged historiated initials, but also with a break in the story-telling sequence: the longer Old-Testament narrative is interrupted, at each

[53] At this writing, the website of the New York Public Library (www.nypl.org) hosts an online exhibit echoing its major *Splendor of the Word* exhibition in 2006, including seventeen folios of the *Tickhill Psalter* presented in a zoomable format.

[54] Egbert, *Tickhill Psalter*, p. 77.

Fig. 3.6 *Tickhill Psalter*, Psalm 38, fol. 38: David and Abigail. Photo: by permission of the New York Public Library, New York.

division, with scenes from the life of David that in turn form their own story, nestled within the longer one. Although the story of David in the main initials is in essence a continuation of the longer narrative, it stands alone in marking out the main divisions. In contrast, the structure of the visual narrative in Prior Tickhill's manuscript is linear. The story moves along from page to page, in the *bas-de-page* spaces with their firm ruling lines and fluttering text scrolls. At the major divisions groups of scenes, as many as eight in a single large-scale historiated initial, quicken the rhythm of the narrative but do not interrupt it by jumping to a different part of the Old Testament. For example, the largest historiated initial, at Psalm 38, incorporates the salient events of an entire chapter of the book of 1 Kings 25 (or Samuel 25). (fig. 3.6) This initial, like the chapter, begins with the burial of Samuel and ends with David's marriage to Abigail. The rest of the scenes detail Abigail's intervention into the conflict between David and her husband Nabal. Although Nabal dies, Abigail averts an attack which, as David put it, would have left "none that pisseth against the wall" of Nabal's men.[55] The scene that immediately precedes this initial, on fol. 37v, depicts the last event in 1 Kings 24, in which David swears allegiance to Saul, and it is followed on fol. 38v with the very first event in 1 Kings 26.

Although the other major initials are similarly fitted into the *bas-de-page* narrative, the Psalm 38 initial is more active, in terms of narrative and in terms of design. The multiplicity of episodes on the page necessitates many scrolls fluttering out into the margin; these appear to float on top of a field of brilliantly colored tesserae, bounded by uncharacteristically heavy, spiky foliate borders. The framing of the scenes within the initial, and in the two colored spaces directly beneath it, is also complex in the use of paired, interlaced bands, carrying rows of white dots, bounding heavily-diapered spaces.[56] The almost baroque quality of this initial in effect obscures the penitential psalm text behind the Biblical narrative; the fluttering white scrolls with their captions are more legible than the *incipit*, squeezed into two roundels at the top and bottom right of the initial. These text scrolls write the historical text, the narrative, into the image; here, as Alison Flett notes in describing similar scroll texts in another manuscript, "the verbal

[55] 1 Kings 25: 34 (Douay-Rheims).

[56] Sandler noted the dramatic nature of the scrolls and the mosaic-like quality of many of the illuminations in *Splendor of the Word*, p. 204.

penetrates the visual in a process which fuses word and image."[57] This fusion of word and image guides the reading of the narrative in other ways, for the viewer of the Biblical narrative moves through these dense initials as he would move through the text: from top to bottom, and from left to right.

The text scrolls label figures, describe their actions, or act as speech, and help move the reader's eye throughout the dense decoration. These scrolls are not abstract forms, but participate in the fictive space of the illuminations by issuing from mouths, draping over figures or wrapping around arms. (fig. 3.6) They also ensure that the historical context of each episode is kept in the foreground, often by differentiating very similar images or scenes that occur in fast succession. The scrolls activate the *bas-de-page* in particular as a separate theatrical space in which the history of David—the author of the psalms so formally inscribed and analyzed above—marches on with episodic minutiae explained at a level rivaling a daily journal or a modern blog.

As Sandler noted, the verbal and visual Biblical narrative provides a historical counterpoint to the moralizing and Christological focus of the main textual paraphernalia, the excerpts of Peter Lombard's commentary and the collects that accompany the Psalms in the main text block.[58] Yet within the relentless visual depiction of the book of Kings, editorial decisions emphasize themes of intercession and penitence that accord well with the use of the psalms, particularly in the monastic context in which this manuscript seems to have been created.[59] Abigail's intercession in the chapter depicted in the Psalm 38 initial saves many lives, for example. (fig. 3.6) Other major psalm initial complexes also focus on protection or intercession: Jonathan's protection of David from Saul at Psalm 26; Joab's intervention on behalf of Absalom through the medium of the "Wise woman" of Tekoa at Psalm 80, and David's prevention of a plague at Psalm 109. Other major initials stage episodes emphasizing David's priestly role and his position as the composer of the psalms themselves; at Psalm 68, for example,

[57] Alison R. Flett, "The Significance of Text Scrolls: Towards a Descriptive Terminology," in eds. Margaret M. Manion and Bernard J. Muir, *Medieval Texts and Images: Studies of Manuscripts from the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1991), p. 44.

[58] Sandler, *Splendor of the Word*, pp. 203–04.

[59] See Kuczynski, *Prophetic Song*, for an exploration of the importance of the penitent David.

he is depicted playing musical instruments and standing before altars as the Ark is returned to Jerusalem.

It is important to note that while David imagery is frequently found in the historiated initials that mark the major psalm divisions in Gothic psalters, those in the *Tickhill Psalter* respond to the manuscript's own visual narrative rather than to typical patterns of illustration.[60] Indeed, given the overall number of episodes, it is clear that the sequence as a whole must have been carefully shaped to enable the coincidence of these points in David's biography, often coinciding with the start of new chapters in the Biblical pre-text, with major opportunities for visual and verbal explication. (Appendix, Chart II) But these chapter divisions are apparent only with reference to their pre-texts—the Biblical book and the *Historia Scholastica*—and are not brought out by the captions.[61] The major initials provide the stage for the primary divisions in the Biblical narrative, emphasizing the importance of an intercessory or protective role both for the Old Testament ruler and for the medieval viewer.

Even though the *Isabella* and *Tickhill Psalters* are so similar in their painting styles and their use of initials and margins to carry long Old-Testament narratives, they would have been planned specifically to enhance the experiences considered to be appropriate for their intended audiences; perhaps the distance between these experiences explains the differences in their narrative strategies. As a laywoman, the queen would have received guidance in her prayers from her confessor, and presumably would have been more comfortable reading the French translation than the Latin. Yet the primary visual narrative was threaded through the Latin psalms, the text presented in the institutional language of the Church, which was vested with an almost magical power in the multilingual culture of contemporary England.[62] The tiny and engrossing initials in her psalter ensured her physical closeness to them; their division into chapters ensured that she experienced the text in the right rhythm. Richard Tickhill's experience of

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[60] Stanton, *Queen Mary Psalter*, p. 37.

[61] Emmerson, "A 'Large Order of the Whole'," pp. 64–66.

[62] Many scholars have addressed the power of Latin not only as the institutional language of the Church, but as a language that could provide magic or apotropaic phrases; see Skemer, *Binding Words*, pp. 153–56; Michael Richter, "*Latina lingua—sacra seu vulgaris*?" in (eds.) W. Lourdaux and D. Verhelst, *The Bible and Medieval Culture Mediaevalia Lovaniensia* (Louvain: Louvain University Press, 1979), p. 16.

the Latin psalms themselves should have been deep and visceral, and not dependent on this specific psalter. At his Augustinian priory, the psalms would have been read through or chanted in their entirety every week, by every cleric, and thus not only committed to memory but, as Michael Kuczynski notes, "part of [the] community's literary subconscious."[63] For the prior and his clerical colleagues, the minutiae of the Davidic biography would have been just as important in their devotional ruminations as the psalms themselves. For a thousand years, David had provided a dual role model for kings and clerics alike not only through his words—the psalms presented and explained, via the Lombard's commentaries, above—but also through the example of his life, in particular his mistakes and his remorse, which was laid before the Prior's eyes in the tiny, brilliant scenes of the marginal narrative and emphasized by the calibration of the narrative to the overall psalm initial hierarchy.[64] Like Isabella, Richard Tickhill was brought close to the manuscript page, but his devotional progress does not appear to have been so consciously shaped by the calibration of visual "chapters" and psalm divisions. Rather, the imagery was organized to heighten the intellectual and intertextual relationships the psalms, and their author, held for its monastic user.

The Queen Mary Psalter

Long hailed as one of the most elegant of illuminated manuscripts produced in England, the *Queen Mary Psalter* represents an intriguing approach to the use of narrative in psalter design. This manuscript retains the prefatory narratives typical of many earlier luxury psalters, and maintains a strict division between Old- and New-Testament material.[65] As Chart III (Appendix) shows, the Old Testament narrative—as lengthy as that of the Isabella Psalter—is presented as a prefatory picture-book, complete with captions in Anglo-Norman French. While the prefatory sequences frequently found in earlier psalters included scenes from both Old and New Testaments,[66] in the *Queen Mary Psalter*

[63] Kuczynski, *Prophetic Song*, p. 47.
[64] Kuczynski, *Prophetic Song*, pp. 3–50.
[65] Stanton, *Queen Mary Psalter*, pp. 26–58.
[66] Stahl, *Picturing Kingship*, pp. 133–67; Kauffmann, *Biblical Imagery*, chapters 4, 5, 7.

the New Testament material is brought into the decorative scheme of the psalm divisions as framed illuminations depicting scenes from the life of Christ. The psalm divisions are also marked by historiated initials that mostly conform to a typical cycle of word-pictures linking the psalm incipit to the authorship of David (fig. 3.3) although in some locations they participate in the narrative of the miniatures.[67]

Both the illuminations and the historiated initials are executed in brilliant colors, with ample gilding, while the Old Testament scenes are essentially drawings, tinted in a limited palette of pastel colors. This delicate color scheme is carried into the *bas-de-page* of the psalms, where every page is occupied by unframed marginal subjects either floating in the space or anchored to a lightly drawn ruling line.[68] As the chart shows, these marginal subjects fall into separate sequences, some more clearly defined than others. Like the bestiary sequence in the *Isabella Psalter*, that of the *Queen Mary Psalter* follows the order of a specific group of bestiary texts.[69] Unlike the scenes in the *Isabella* manuscript, however, those in the *Queen Mary Psalter* are generally presented in couplets of paired scenes. This use of paired scenes continues through the subsequent sequences, from the series of paintings of hybrids, hunting, and courtly combats that footnote the middle section of the psalms, through the hagiographic stories that follow.

This means that every opening in the *Queen Mary Psalter* presents a visual narrative. Even when there are only two or three scenes in a specific story, as is most often the case, the first scene depicts an action, the effect of which is seen in the second, as in the depiction of the weasel that conceives through the mouth, and then gives birth through the ear.[70] (fig. 3.3) In these couplets, the narrative known from the pre-text provides a momentum that is further enhanced by the visual

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[67] For more on the English tradition of historiated initials see Sandler, *Peterborough Psalter*, pp. 98–99.

[68] A few openings are left completely blank, as where two successive openings divide the end of Psalm 108 from the *incipit* of Psalm 109; given the careful planning evident throughout this manuscript it is likely that this was an intentional feature. Stanton, *Queen Mary Psalter*, p. 50.

[69] Stanton, *Queen Mary Psalter,* p. 44. The two marginal bestiaries are however based on different recensions of the original texts.

[70] See Debra Hassig, *Medieval Bestiaries: Text, Image, Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 29–39; in many bestiaries the weasel conceives through the ear and gives birth through the mouth.

design, which often employs a left-right movement as well.[71] These stories also appear to be coordinated in places with the psalm divisions and with the subjects of the Christological miniatures that announce them. (Chart III—Appendix) The bestiary accompanies Psalms 1–37, often providing opportunities for intertextual connections between the two narrative sequences; for example, the image of the weasel's 'virgin birth' underlines the Incarnational aspects of the Christological miniature above it.[72] (fig. 3.3) Fighting hybrid creatures make an appropriate appearance below the *incipit* to Psalm 38, which is marked by a framed miniature of the Massacre of the Innocents. Even though depictions of hybrid grotesques lack a known pre-text, the figures are often repeated across the openings or on other folios, creating an intervisual movement consistent with that of the bestiary scenes. Intervisual connections pull the eyes of the reader not only across pages, but also to the tops of the pages at Psalms 68, 80, 07, and 101, where miniatures of the Ministry of Christ accompany marginal couplets that depict the Miracles of the Virgin. This combination effectively establishes the Virgin's miracles as a continuation, often taking place in recent history, of the Ministry of Christ.[73]

The narrative momentum of the Psalter's imagery increases with the paintings that accompany Psalm 109 on fol. 233v. Here, the framed miniatures situated above the text to mark important textual divisions depict episodes from the Passion of Christ. While Psalm 109 is typically the last psalm *incipit* to be emphasized, in the *Queen Mary Psalter* the long Psalm 118 is divided into four sections with paired miniatures that each present four scenes of the Passion. The miniatures reach a narrative crescendo with the opening to Psalm 119, the first of the Gradual Psalms, which is marked with a dramatic miniature of the Crucifixion facing another quadripartite miniature. (fig. 3.7)

The Passion series continues into the Canticles and, by the Litany, have been succeeded by miniatures that show groups of standing saints. The marginal accompaniment to the Passion sequence however provides the primary narrative movement from page to page, since every single opening is decorated with two scenes that encapsulate

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[71] Emmerson discusses a similar narrative momentum in "A 'Large Order of the Whole'," pp. 79–80.

[72] Hassig, *Medieval Bestiaries*, p. 31; Stanton, *Queen Mary Psalter*, p. 45.

[73] Stanton, *Queen Mary Psalter,* p. 51.

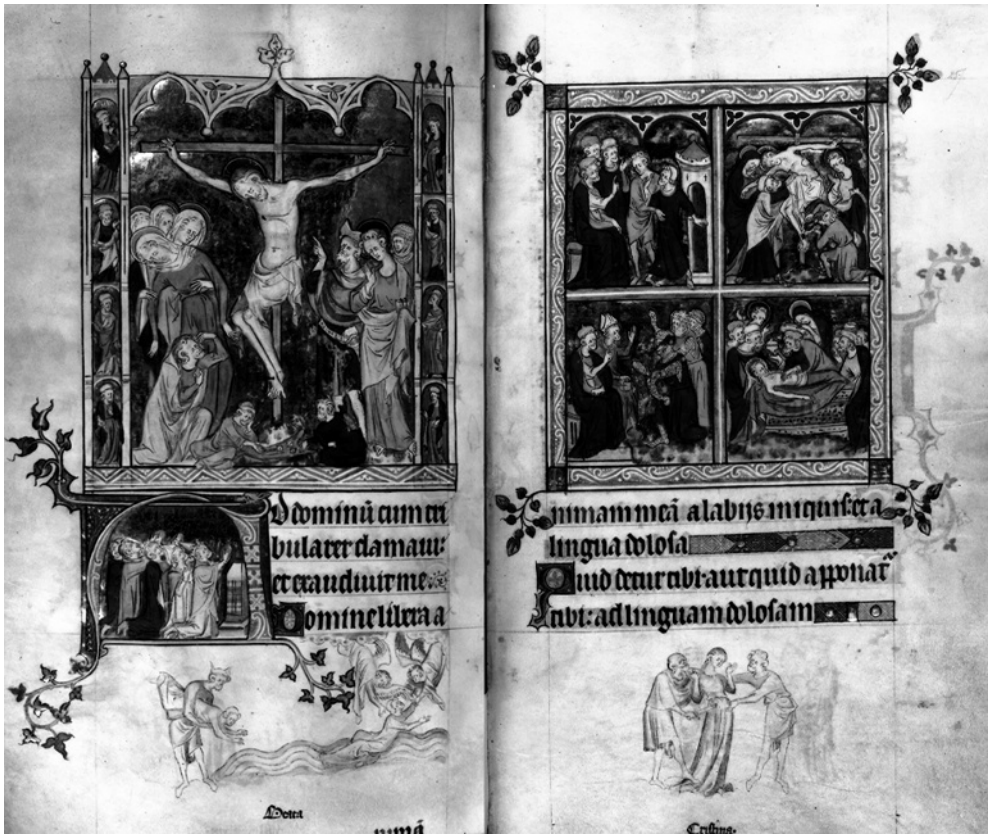

Fig. 3.7 *Queen Mary Psalter*, Psalm 119, fols. 356v–357: Crucifixion, Deposition, and Entombment; martyrdom of St. Christina. Photo: by permission of the British Library Board, London.

the martyrdom of a saint. The series of martyrdoms, like the bestiary scenes, follow a specific order in that the saints are presented in the order in which they appear in the calendar. These scenes are also labeled, marking their increased importance. These images of martyrdom, which provide an insistent reminder of the liturgical calendar, are carefully calibrated with the glowing miniatures of the Passion of Christ. As discussed above, Isabella's earliest English psalter may have used marginal narrative as a strategy to keep her eyes close to the Latin psalms, and to ensure that she moved through them in a devotionally appropriate pattern. In the Queen Mary Psalter, the marginal scenes also would have necessitated a close view of the pages, since they were presented in the form of tinted drawings rather than colorful paint-

ings. The narrative momentum discussed here also may have acted to keep the reader turning the pages, and looking closely at the psalms, beyond the colorful psalm *incipits*, for the loose grouping of different sequences to coordinate with different psalm divisions also echoes the control demonstrated in the *Isabella Psalter*.

But since the *bas-de-page* narratives of the *Queen Mary Psalter* are for the most part short, and appear on the same page with the competing narratives at the major openings, the relationship between text and image is here quite different. The Old Testament stories in the preface are presented in the same pale tints as the marginalia in the psalter proper, suggesting some continuity of the romantic/historical narrative into the more contemporary margins.[74] But the impact of the large, formal script of the Latin psalms and the brilliantly colored illuminations almost overwhelms the marginal images. It has already been suggested that the page design of the psalm divisions, with their pastel marginal scenes, dark, bold texts, and glowing miniatures, echoes in its *mise-en-page* contemporary ideas about the cosmos, and the relationship of the reader to the Word and to God.[75] In the devotional framework of the *Speculum Ecclesiae*, written by thirteenth-century English theologian Edmund of Abingdon, the contemplation of the sacred is to be undertaken in three stages. The devout reader contemplates God first through the wonders of the created world, second through the word of God as transmitted in Biblical texts, and finally through thinking about the Incarnation. The margins present the world of humanity, even in the case where they focus on the actions of the Virgin and the saints. The script of the Latin psalms is large and formal, and the glowing Christological illuminations above provide a focus for the final stage of contemplation.

This is most clear in the opening at Psalm 119, which starts the series of psalms known as the Gradual Psalms. (fig. 3.7) The Gradual Psalms are often emphasized in English prayerbooks, and in the *Isabella Psalter* are marked in the French Psalm 119 by a historiated initial depicting the queen at prayer; the same psalm in the *Taymouth Hours* receives even more dramatic visual framing, discussed below.

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[74] The bestiary scenes are essentially of any era, while the courtly scenes and much of the imagery in the Miracles of the Virgin and hagiographical sequences record or evoke events that are part of the reader's own era.

[75] Stanton, *Queen Mary Psalter*, pp. 76–80; for Edmund of Abingdon's work, see *The Mirour de Seinte Eglyse (St. Edmund of Abingdon's Speculum Ecclesiae)*, transl. A.D. Wilshere (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, vol. 40, 1982).

(fig. 3.4) In the *Queen Mary Psalter*, this opening is emphasized with paired framed miniatures of the Crucifixion facing a quartet of Passion scenes. The text, which reads "In my trouble I cried to the Lord, and he heard me," is acted out in its beginning initial, historiated with a group of varied people kneeling before an altar, all looking up at the Crucifixion miniature. Below, St. Christina's travails, presented in two vignettes on the same page, shows her thrown into the sea, and then rescued by a pair of angels before her final martyrdom as depicted on the facing page.

Whether or not the designer of the *Queen Mary Psalter* intentionally referred to the *Speculum Ecclesiae*, or other devotional treatises, he created a decorative structure that used sequential images to provide a variety of devotional experiences for the viewer. A fairly extensive narrative of the life of Christ, depicted in nearly ninety individual episodes, is provided in the paired miniatures of the main psalm divisions. In a way this is reminiscent of the system in the earlier *Isabella Psalter*, where a biography of King David could be followed by browsing through the historiated initials and marginal scenes at the main psalm divisions. Many of the miniatures in the *Queen Mary Psalter* however are presented in architectural frameworks that contain small figures of prophets or saints witnessing the action. These figures both model and intensify the act of viewing for the reader of the book; they also emphasize the visual separation of the narrative scene from the psalm text beneath it. The marginalia on the other hand follow their own internal logic that, despite the thematic links discussed above, provides an episodic rhythm quite separate from that of the miniatures. Here the figures, lively despite the elegance of their stance, twist and move through the stories; pointing fingers and exaggerated gestures draw the eye across and around the *bas-de-page* spaces. The sequences proceed often in couplets, one story for each opening, which are unified by theme rather than by narrative thread. And all of these sequences seem to have been calibrated to produce stunning moments of devotional clarity, as at Psalm 119, which speak to their importance in the overall devotional design of the book.

The Taymouth Hours

The *Taymouth Hours* is in many ways a *summa* of design aspects explored in the other three manuscripts. Its *mise-en-page* is very similar to that of the *Queen Mary Psalter*, in that the *incipits* are marked

with relatively large framed miniatures, and the bottom of every page presents two episodes in a sequence of images. (fig. 3.4) These sequences sometimes proceed in paired scenes, like the couplets of the *Queen Mary Psalter*, but more often participate in the narratives put forward by other images in the opening, like the sequences in the *Isabella* and *Tickhill Psalters*. The *Taymouth* marginal narratives are frequently accompanied by a text that competes with the devotional readings above them, like those of the *Tickhill Psalter*, but instead of fluttering banderoles full of Scholastic Latin, the reader is presented with Anglo-Norman captions written in red ink, like the French captions of the *Queen Mary Psalter* prefatory narrative, or the translated psalms of the *Isabella Psalter*.[76] Like the prefatory text of the *Queen Mary Psalter*, the captions of the *Taymouth Hours* frequently refer the reader directly to the image by beginning with "Cy," as in the caption below the episode from the romance "Enyas and the Wodewose" depicted in fig. 3.9.

Yet the *Taymouth* manuscript is a different kind of prayerbook than the others. Books where the Hours of the Virgin provided the primary devotional text were becoming more prominent on the Continent, but English readers commissioned lavish psalters through the end of the century.[77] With their shorter and more numerous prayers, meant to be used several times a day, books of hours provided more opportunities for personalization, and for decoration, as demonstrated by the crowded slots in Chart IV (Appendix). The daily devotional process intended for a book like the *Taymouth Hours* meant that the miniatures that mark the *incipits* of the individual hourly prayers to the Virgin, as well as the Gradual Psalms (for example) were intended to be seen on a daily basis, whereas the more leisurely, week-long use planned for a psalter promoted a more dispersed devotional view of the main initials or miniatures. Thus images marking the *incipits* of those hourly prayers were intended to be seen in relatively quick succession, making a narrative structure more apparent to a pious user.

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[76] The captions are transcribed, with descriptions of the scenes, in M.R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Second Series of Fifty Manuscripts (Nos. 51–100) in the Collection of Henry Yates-Thompson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1902), pp. 56–74.

[77] The Bohun family in particular commissioned psalters that seem to echo the narrative approach of the manuscripts under discussion here; see Sandler, *Lichtenthal Psalter, passim*. Of the manuscripts included in Sandler's *Gothic Manuscripts 1285–1385,* around thirty were books of hours or psalter-hours; around fifty were psalters, the majority of which were produced before *c.* 1350.

Furthermore, the prayers themselves had a much more intimate tone; while the psalms themselves were hymns of praise or entreaties for help, the hourly prayers were shorter and at their core focused on the Virgin Mary, who seemed more accessible than the somewhat distant Old-Testament Lord of the Psalms.[78] The prayers and the images that often accompanied them emphasized an affective piety that provided a more popular devotional path for the faithful of the later medieval period, particularly female readers.[79]

In the *Taymouth Hours*, the core text—the Hours of the Virgin—are marked for the most part by framed miniatures at the *incipit* of each hourly devotion; the subjects of these miniatures are similar to those used in many books of hours and focus appropriately on the lives of the Virgin and Christ.[80] At the beginning of the Matins readings the imagery consists of paired miniatures; Prime is marked by a miniature and a large historiated initial, the only one in the manuscript.[81] From the Anglo-Norman prayers that follow directly upon the calendar through the beginning of the Office of the Dead (the last text), the reader is treated to a program of miniatures that resembles the Christological sequence of the *Queen Mary Psalter*, although the focus shifts from the biographical mode of the Psalter to a greater interest in devotional and personal subjects, with the inclusion of three images of the crowned woman in different prayerful contexts that dovetail with all texts and images in the same opening. (fig. 3.8)

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[78] Of the many publications on books of hours, the one that most clearly evokes the personal rhythm of a book of hours, albeit a very early and idiosyncratic example, is Claire Donovan's *The de Brailes Hours: Shaping the Book of Hours in Thirteenth-Century Oxford* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1991), especially pp. 42–131.

[79] Sandra Penketh, "Women and Books of Hours," in eds. Lesley Smith and Jane H.M. Taylor, *Women and the Book: Assessing the Visual Evidence*, (London and Toronto: The British Library and University of Toronto Press, 1997), pp. 266–81.

[80] Programs of illustration for these texts were very flexible, and only later in the medieval period would set structures be developed for specific geographical areas or "uses." Claire Donovan, "The mise-en-page of early Books of Hours in England" in (ed.) Linda L. Brownrigg, *Medieval Book Production: Assessing the Evidence* (Los Altos Hills, CA: Anderson-Lovelace, 1990), pp. 147–62, and for later developments see for example Roger Wieck, *Painted Prayers: the Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York: Braziller, 1998).

[81] Fols. 59v–60 and 88v–89; the other *incipits* in Matins are marked with one miniature and *bas-de-page* scenes, all of which depict sequential episodes from the life of Christ.

Fig. 3.8 *Taymouth Hours*, fol. 118v: Agony in the Garden; royal supplicants kneeling in prayer. Photo: by permission of the British Library Board, London.

The textual content of the *Taymouth Hours* is complex.[82] Many openings display text in various script hierarchies—and different languages, even in the main text block—presenting a visual field of sometimes confusing variety.[83] The *bas-de-page* figures are part of this field in every opening, performing on a stage formed by the bottom bar of the border that frames the text block, and occupying around one-fourth of the text block. Their consistent location, saturated color, and relative scale attract the eye more directly than the pastel, unframed sequences in the *Queen Mary Psalter*, despite other similarities between the two prayerbooks. In addition, the captions written below the *Hours'* marginalia frequently begin with Anglo-Norman versions of "Here" or "How," firmly directing the readers' eyes up to the marginal images and thus into the text block as a whole.

The *bas-de-page* sequences in both manuscripts include short narratives, single scenes that signal longer narratives, and visual couplets.[84] But there are also sequences in the book of hours that expand the Christological narrative of the miniatures, so that they form longer linear narratives, much like the David narrative in the *Tickhill Psalter*. The Hours of the Cross and the Penitential Psalms, for example, are underscored by captioned narratives of the Passion, the death of the Virgin, and the Last Judgment, that seamlessly unify the import of the prayers and the themes of the miniatures, involving the entire visual field of the page in the devotional act. The Anglo-Norman captions below these images effectively provide a separate historical sequence to frame the devotional texts, like the captioned marginalia in the *Tickhill Psalter*, although they do not activate the image in the same way as the *Psalter's* fluttering banderoles. Despite the difference in language and presentation, the captions in both manuscripts emphasize the impor-

[82] In addition to those texts basic to its book type—such as the Hours of the Virgin, the Penitential Psalms and Litany—the manuscript also contains three other hourly devotions as well as a set of Anglo-Norman devotional texts.

[83] The linguistic variety of the *Taymouth Hours* has been addressed recently by Brantley, "Images of the Vernacular," and by Richard K. Emmerson in "Visualizing the Vernacular: Middle English in early fourteenth-century bilingual and trilingual Manuscript Illustrations" in (eds.) Kathryn A. Smith and Carol H. Krinsky, *Tributes to Lucy Freeman Sandler: Studies in Illuminated Manuscripts* (London: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2007), pp. 187–204, esp. pp. 189–92.

[84] Single scenes such as the painting of Samson and the lion, and a virgin and a unicorn, on fols. 7v and 8, each signal longer and well-known narratives while acting thematically as a couplet. Other sequences, like the Miracles of the Virgin, play out in paired scenes similar to the Miracle sequence in the *Queen Mary Psalter*.

tance of narrative in competition with the non-narrative devotional texts, and in both cases the narrative frequently guides the eye of the viewer through various sectors on the pages.[85] Still, the *Taymouth* captions are less closely based on an existing text, and are often truly marginal in that they are usually written below the border; when the scribe ran short of room, he simply repositioned the folio and continued to write along the right margin of the page. (fig. 3.9)

The consistent appearance of the large, colorful *bas-de-page* images, often outfitted with short, direct, vernacular captions, may have played a strong role in guiding the reader through the manuscript and encouraging her to keep turning the pages. The narrative interest of the Biblical sequences, calibrated to underline important episodes in the linked miniatures, is often activated by the inclusion of personal images—the images of the crowned woman at prayer in the miniatures, and in a *bas-de-page* scene below a miniature of the Agony in the Garden. (fig. 3.8) The inclusion of vernacular stories in which women play important roles may also underline the importance the designer placed in pulling the viewer's attention to the *bas-de-page*. Two of these—the stories of Bevis of Hampton and Guy of Warwick—are included at the very start of the devotional texts, below Anglo-Norman prayers intended to provide extra guidance before and during the Mass.[86] The figures in these stories are labeled but otherwise explanatory captions are omitted, either because the stories were so well-known or to avoid competing with the vernacular prayers in the main text block. A third sequence depicts a story that does not have any identified textual analogue, that of Enyas and the Wodewose; it does have lengthy captions. (fig. 3.9) This story accompanies Matins of the Virgin and provides a segue between *bas-de-page* narratives of the Infancy of the Virgin and a series captioned with the title "Jeu des

[85] This occurs frequently with texts as well as images, as on fol. 87v where an uncaptioned crowd of clerical and lay figures illustrate the antiphon *Omnes sancti* just above them—an example of "associative" relationships discussed by Brantley, "Images of the Vernacular," pp. 84, 95–101.

[86] See fols. 8v-12 for Bevis of Hampton, and 12v-17, with losses, for Guy of Warwick. Brantley, "Images of the Vernacular," focuses on the tale of Bevis of Hampton in particular in her exploration of the vernacular character of the *Taymouth*'s imagery and its devotional function. See also Linda L. Brownrigg, "The Taymouth Hours and the Romance of *Beves of Hampton*," *English Manuscript Studies 1100–1700* I (1989), pp. 222–41; David Griffith, "The Visual History of Guy of Warwick" in (eds.) Alison Wiggins and Rosalind Field, *Guy of Warwick: Icon and Ancestor* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2007), pp. 110–32, esp. pp. 112–14.

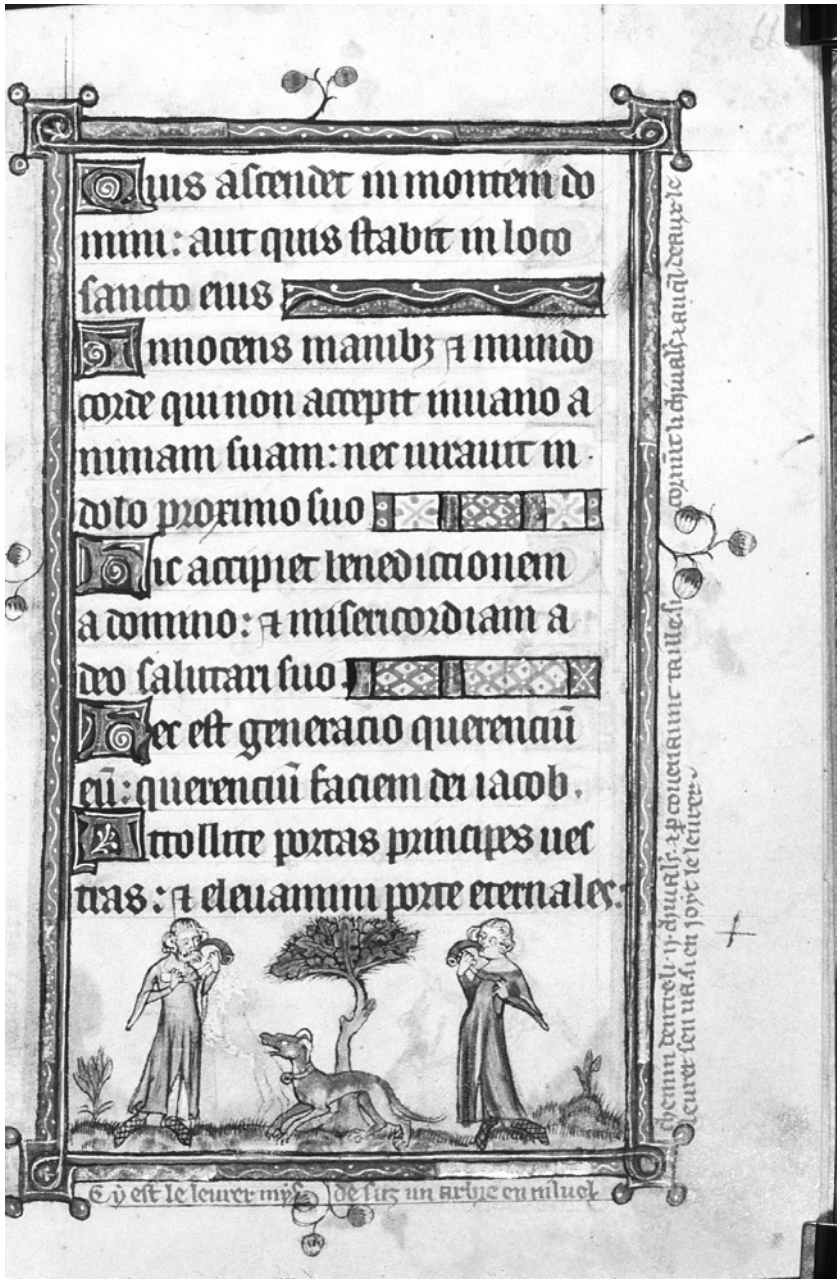
Quis ascendet in montem do
mini: aut quis stabit in loco
sancto eius
Innocens manibz & mundo
corde qui non accepit in vano a
nimam suam: nec iurauit in
dolo proximo suo
Hic accipiet benedictionem
a domino: & misericordiam a
deo salutari suo
Hec est generacio querencium
eum: querencium faciem dei iacob.
Attollite portas principes ves
tras: & elevamini porte eternales:
Et ÿ est le leuier mys
de sur un arbre en milieu

Fig. 3.9 *Taymouth Hours*, fol. 66, Matins of the Virgin: Enyas. Photo: by permission of the British Library Board, London.

dames," or "Ladies' Games," which shows women hunting a variety of animals.[87] The stag hunt comes to its conclusion below the beginning of the *memoriae* on fol. 83v. Since the stag or hart was frequently seen as a symbol for Christ, the vivid painting of a stag being dismembered by four ladies forms a disturbing analogue to the martyrdoms of Saints Peter and Stephen depicted on the facing page, and subsequent images of martyred saints.[88] These three marginal sequences unify the prayers to be said at Matins and Lauds, which in lay use were generally said together at daybreak.[89]

The martyrdoms end with the beheading of St. Anastasia below the historiated initial of the Nativity of Christ at the *incipit* of Prime, the hourly worship following Lauds.[90] Her martyrdom acts both as the end of one marginal sequence and the beginning of the next, which depicts scenes from the Infancy of Christ; it also provides a pause between these two narratives, which are otherwise quite separate in terms of their own internal chronology—a reader following the story would have been encouraged to stop at a point coinciding with the end of a devotional text. The marginal vignettes that accompany the remainder of the Hours of the Virgin, the Hours of the Cross, and the Penitential Psalms form a seamless narrative with the miniatures that mark the text divisions, drawing the reader through the Infancy, Ministry, and Passion of Christ in great detail while also drawing her eyes through her prayers. The Passion episodes accompany the Hours of the Cross and, as Gee has noted, encourage a compassionate response from the viewer through a focus on the responses of the Virgin to the various

[87] Fols. 60v–67v for the story of Enyas and the Wodewose; the *Jeu des dames* is on fols. 68–83v.

[88] For a summary of contemporary literature relating the stag to Christ see John Cummins, *The Hound and the Hawk: the Art of Medieval Hunting* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), pp. 68–74.

[89] Roger S. Wieck, *Time Sanctified: the Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life* (New York and Baltimore: Braziller Books and the Walters Art Gallery, 1988), p. 28.

[90] Anastasia's legend had long since been incorporated into the story of the Nativity and indeed she is depicted three times in the *Taymouth Hours*; on fol. 88v peering out of the top story of the inn that is too full for Mary and Joseph; in the historiated initial of the Nativity on fol. 89v, waving her restored hand; and below, awaiting her beheading in prayer. This folio may be the earliest instance in which Anastasia is depicted in a Nativity initial at Prime, a theme picked up later in French books of hours. See Diane E. Booton, "Variation on a Limbourg Theme: Saint Anastasia at the Nativity in a Getty Book of Hours and in French Medieval Literature," *Fifteenth Century Studies* 29 (2004), 52–79, especially pp. 62–65.

events.[91] The Penitential Psalms begin on fol. 126 with an unusual miniature depicting Christ's affectionate meeting with his mother after his resurrection.[92] This miniature begins a visual sequence that focuses on the end of the first Incarnation and the end of the life of the Virgin, which culminates in the Last Judgment and a subsequent sequence of the Torments of the Damned.[93]

While the miniature of Christ meeting the Virgin, like most of the other miniatures, participates in the *bas-de-page* narrative, it also forms part of a meta-narrative that takes place in the miniatures alone. These large illuminations depict major events of the life of Christ and his mother—both commonly-depicted events like the Resurrection, and events that the *Hours'* designer wished to emphasize, like the meeting of Christ and his mother—while the marginal vignettes tie the illuminations together with enriching corroborative detail. The reader is present in this meta-narrative through allusion and empathy, as she would have been led to identify with the Virgin in these images, and through direct representation. (figs. 3.4, 3.8) The framed miniature that headlines Psalm 119 at the start of the Gradual Psalms (fig. 3.4) is part of this meta-narrative, for the Virgin, who had just met her resurrected son, now presents the penitent reader to him. The Virgin places a supportive hand on the kneeling queen's back and holds a blank text-scroll that leads one's eyes to the tripartite halo of the enthroned Christ, who reaches out a hand in blessing to the kneeling figure. The text of Psalm 119 begins "In my trouble I cried to the Lord, and he heard me," but below the Latin text the damned are led off to their Torments, and the Anglo-Norman caption begins with *Alas alas,* words that need no translation even today.

Many more examples could be adduced to emphasize the coordination of the marginal sequences with prayers and miniatures that would have reinforced the customary devotional reading patterns. It is a gloriously complex manuscript intended, perhaps even more than the *Queen Mary Psalter*, to be enjoyed and to be consumed on many different levels, and contains a great variety of textual and visual read-

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[91] Gee, *Women, Art and Patronage*, pp. 51–52, discusses the way in which the marginal images and texts encourage an empathetic response.

[92] Smith, *Art, Identity and Devotion*, p. 234, 248 n. 257, discusses the background of this rare image, which appears in a small number of English manuscripts in response to an Anglo-Norman poem recounting the visitation of the Virgin in a dream-vision.

[93] Suzanne Lewis, "The Apocalypse of Isabella of France: Paris, Bibl. Nat. MS Fr. 13096," *The Art Bulletin* 72 (1990), pp. 224–260, esp. pp. 230–31.

ing modes that would have been personally tailored to the expectations held by and for its intended owner. Previous scholarship on the *Taymouth Hours* has explored its patronage context or addressed its "vernacularity," thus focusing on the miniatures of crowned women, or on the *bas-de-page* romance sequences. It is to be hoped that future studies will examine in more detail the interrelationships between the varied texts, the encyclopedic imagery, and the devotional function that guided its design.

Some Closing Thoughts

In this essay I discussed four manuscripts in chronological order, an approach that may appear to demonstrate an evolution in the use of narrative in marginal spaces to shape devotional use. While this appearance of evolution might have some basis in fact—three of the manuscripts are likely to have been produced for use in the same circles—it is more likely to stem from the different decorative hierarchies used by their designers. The *Isabella Psalter*, which seems to be the simplest of the lot, is laid out as was typical of late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century English psalters. While the two-column layout of the *Tickhill Psalter* creates a different and more formal appearance, it is one shared with a few other contemporary psalters. The *Queen Mary Psalter*, however, looks nothing like other psalters; its *mise-en-page* reflects instead the design of a few contemporary French psalters and books of hours.[94] It may be that this psalter's designer intentionally used an updated page design to give the ancient prayer text typical of English devotional practice a continental flavor and, moreover, to dress it up as a new book type that was growing in popularity.[95] The *Taymouth Hours* may be the earliest-known English book of hours to take on such a continental design, a choice that most likely reflects the strong French connections surrounding its patronage context;

[94] Stanton, *Queen Mary Psalter*, pp. 62–65; these manuscripts include the Hours of Jeanne of Evreux now in the Cloisters (54.1.2, *c.* 1324–28), intended for Jeanne, the cousin and sister-in-law of Isabella. A relationship between the Annunciation miniatures in the Cloisters hours (on fol. 16) and in the Taymouth Hours (fol. 60) was recognized by Erwin Panofsky in *Early Netherlandish Painting* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1953), vol. 1, p. 6, who termed the English miniature a "terribly garbled imitation" of the French image.

[95] Stanton, *Queen Mary Psalter*, p. 65.

either its designer was inspired by the *Queen Mary Psalter*, or by the same kinds of continental models that inspired the Psalter's designer. By virtue of its book type, however, the *Taymouth Hours* however is much more complicated than the *Queen Mary Psalter*, and its figural decoration reflects that complexity. Yet both manuscripts make use of coherent sequences in the *bas-de-page* to unify stretches of prayer texts by the power of story-telling.

At the start of this essay I proposed that the use of narrative or serial marginalia in these manuscripts was intended to play two roles. First, the small size of the scenes, and the intriguing and often affective nature of the stories they told, would have brought the viewer's eyes close to the pages. Scenes of King David marrying, depictions of the births and martyrdoms of saints, or contemporary romances captioned in the vernacular were brought into play to heighten the interest level of these small spaces. That the desired effect of all this was to shorten the distance of the viewer to the page, and thus the prayers, is supported by several aspects of medieval devotional thought and practice. Don Skemer's work on textual amulets explores a strong belief in the magical qualities of certain texts, including certain psalms and other Biblical texts or prayers, qualities that were intensified by close contact.[96] The importance of this exposure would have been underlined by the understanding of Biblical or devotional books as standing in for the flesh of Christ, an aspect of medieval book culture addressed by Kathryn Smith.[97] Thus the close inspection needed to understand the episodes in, for example, the *Isabella Psalter*, would have played a role in increasing the viewer's exposure to images and prayers whose power rested not only in their sense, but also in their substance as ink on parchment, an analogue to the body of Christ. And as Biernoff noted, the act of seeing was approached as "a dynamic extension of the subject into the world and at the same time a penetration and alteration of the viewer's body by the object."[98] This physical connection between the viewer and the image, intensified by proximity, would have been a desirable outcome of devotional design, and would seem

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[96] Skemer, *Binding Words, passim;* see pp. 268–78 for books of hours as amuletic objects, although such manuscripts are mentioned throughout.

[97] Kathryn A. Smith, "The Neville of Hornby Hours and the Design of Literate Devotion," *The Art Bulletin* 81 (1999), p. 81.

[98] *Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages*, p. 102.

even more important in the case of devotional books, materially so closely allied with the body of Christ.

Any interesting marginal image could play a similar role; the sexual and scatological subjects discussed by Michael Camille, or the *imagines verborum* explored by Lucy Freeman Sandler, or the grotesque *babewyns* noted by any number of scholars, all could bring the eyes of the viewer closer to the book.[99] But sequential images could provide a book designer with an added capability, allowing him more effective manipulation of that viewer's movement through the pages of her book than would images whose primary intervisual or textual relationships remain on the pages they occupy. Sarah Stanbury's study of medieval literature and visual culture supports the argument that this was deliberate manipulation, for she notes many examples of late medieval texts in which "the gaze itself, the very privilege of vision, is . . . a carefully orchestrated act mediated by others who tell the viewer how and what to see."[100] Thus the *Isabella Psalter* might well have been intentionally designed to lead the viewer through her specific psalm readings simply by reading the visual stories that, like the tale of Moses, were made more engaging by emphasizing romantic and magical aspects. (fig. 3.5) The viewer of the *Taymouth Hours* would have been led through the Gradual Psalms and Litany by examining in minute detail the Torments of the Damned (fig. 3.4), images that may have made more urgent the pleas for help encoded in the Latin prayers. In all of these manuscripts, the tiny narrative episodes pulled their readers closer to the prayers, and then pushed them to keep turning the pages.

[99] Sandler, "Study of Marginal Imagery," *passim*.
[100] In *The Visual Object of Desire,* p. 6.

Appendix: Organizational Charts

Chart I: Isabella Psalter
Developed from Egbert, *Tickhill Psalter*, appendix II

Text	Major Psalm incipits—initials and margins	Ordinary psalms (Latin only)—initials and margins
Calendar	(Labors of the Month and Zodiac signs in roundels)	
Psalm 1	Tree of Jesse; Anointing of David; David harps for Saul	
Psalm 2–25		Creation through the Tower of Babel (39 scenes)
Psalm 26	Missing folios	
Psalms 29–37		Abraham through Jacob (29 scenes)
Psalm 38	David marries Michal; Michal saves David (4 scenes)	
Psalms 39–50		Joseph (25 scenes)
Psalms 51 and 52	Missing folios	
Psalms 55–67		Moses (24 scenes)
Psalm 68	Death of Saul; David offered kingdom (4 scenes)	
Psalms 69–79		Moses continued (18 scenes)
Psalm 80	Missing folios	
Psalms 88–96		Joshua (12 scenes)
Psalm 97	David and Bathsheba (4 scenes)	
Psalms 98–100		Joshua (2 scenes)
Psalm 101	Missing folios	
Psalms 103–108	[some missing folios]	Joshua (5 scenes); Jael and Sisera (2 scenes)
Psalm 109	Latin missing; French depicts David and Abishag through Judgment of Solomon (5 scenes)	
Psalms 110–118		Gideon (15 scenes); Jephthah (4 scenes); Samson (24 scenes)
Psalm 119	Samson through blinding (3 scenes)	Isabella initial
Psalms 120—Canticles and Litany		Saul, Abner, and David through the death of Joab (67 scenes)

Chart II: Tickhill Psalter
Developed from Egbert, *Tickhill Psalter*, appendix I

Text	Historiated Initials and Biblical reference	*Bas-de-page* scenes
Peter Lombard, *Commentarius in Psalmos*	Creation of Heaven and Earth (Genesis 1)	Genesis through Sacrifice of Isaac (14 scenes)
Psalm 1	Samuel sent to Jesse; calls Jesse's sons to sacrifice (1 Kings 16)	Jesse and sons before Samuel; Anointing of David
Psalms 1–25		David's relationships with Saul, Goliath, Jonathan, and Michal (76 scenes)
Psalm 26	David with Jonathan and Saul (4 scenes) (1 Kings 20)	David and Jonathan (2 scenes)
Psalms 26–37		David's relationships with Saul, Jonathan (44 scenes)
Psalm 38	Burial of Samuel; David with Nabal and Abigail (8 scenes) (1 Kings 25)	David gives thanks and marries Abigail (2 scenes)
Psalms 38–50		David with Saul, the Witch of Endor; death of Saul(48 scenes)
Psalm 51	David rends his garments with grief (9-line initial) (2 Kings 1)	David and the Amalekite (4 scenes)
Psalm 52	David goes to Judah and is anointed king (4 scenes) (2 Kings 2)	David and men of Jabesh-gilead (2 scenes)
Psalms 52–67		David and Ish-bosheth, Abner, Joab; anointed king of Israel and enlarges Jerusalem (52 scenes)
Psalm 68	David and the Ark (6 scenes) (2 Kings 6)	Michal and Nathan (2 scenes)
Psalms 68–79		David with Joab, Bathsheba; Amnon and Tamar; Absolom (52 scenes)
Psalm 80	Joab, David, and the Wise Woman of Tekoah (6 scenes) (2 Kings 14)	David and Absolom (2 scenes)
Psalms 80–96		David and Absalom (62 scenes)
Psalm 97	Death of Absalom (6 scenes) (2 Kings 18)	Trip to inform David (2 scenes)
Psalms 97–100		David grieves for Absalom (8 scenes)
Psalm 101	David crossing Jordan (9-line initial) (2 Kings 19)	David with Shimei and Abishai (2 scenes)
Psalms 101–108		David with Joab; the famine (46 scenes)
Psalm 109	David's humility (6 scenes) (2 Kings 24)	David gives thanks (2 scenes)
Psalm 109–118 v. 40		David and Abishag; David's promise to Bathsheba, death, and scenes of Solomon through the burial of Joab (42 scenes)
Psalms—Canticles, Litany		No more marginalia; space for 170 scenes

Chart III: the Queen Mary Psalter
Developed from Warner, *Queen Mary's Psalter*, and Stanton, *Queen Mary Psalter*

Text	Historiated Initials	Miniatures	*Bas-de-page* scenes
Old-Testament preface		Creation through death of Solomon (223 scenes)	
Transitional imagery and Calendar		Diptychs: Tree of Jesse and Holy Kinship/Apostle's Creed; Labors of the Month and Zodiac signs (2 framed genre scenes per month)	
Psalm 1	David playing a harp	Annunciation and Visitation, facing the Nativity across opening; Annunciation to Shepherds at end of Psalm 25	Bestiary sequence (54 scenes, paired, beginning on opening after incipit)
Psalm 26	David pointing to eyes	Adoration of Magi; at end of Ps. 37, Magi before Herod	Bestiary sequence (40 scenes, paired)
Psalm 38	David pointing to mouth	Dream of the Magi, facing Massacre of the Innocents across opening	Scenes of hybrid or courtly combat (34 scenes)
Psalm 51	David and Goliath	Warning of Joseph and Flight into Egypt, facing Presentation in the Temple across opening; at end of Ps. 51, *Virgo Lactans*	Grotesques/combat (4 scenes)
Psalm 52	Fool before David	Virgin presents Christ child to the doctors, facing Christ disputing with the doctors across opening	Hunting/combat/courtly scenes: (36 total, including stag, rabbit, duck hunts; wrestling; gambling)
Psalm 68	Jonah thrown overboard and cast up	Marriage at Cana facing Feeding of the 5000 across opening	Hunting/combat/courtly scenes (44 scenes)
Psalm 80	David and the bells	Baptism of Christ facing two Temptation scenes across opening	Hunting/combat/courtly scenes (28 scenes); Miracles of the Virgin (14 scenes—8 miracles)
Psalm 97	Clerics singing	Above last opening of 96, Mary or Martha in supplication facing the Resurrection of Lazarus	Miracles of the Virgin (2 scenes)

Chart III (*cont.*)

Text	Historiated Initials	Miniatures	*Bas-de-page* scenes
Psalm 101	Samuel anoints David	Above last opening of 100, John the Baptist preaching, facing Christ preaching	Miracles of the Virgin (26 scenes)
Psalm 109 incipit	Trinity	Entry into Jerusalem, facing quadripartite illumination: 4 scenes beginning the Passion narrative	Martyred saints (16 scenes—8saints, captioned)
Psalm 118 (divided into 4 sections)		4 sets of paired quad miniatures: total of 32 Passion scenes	Martyred saints (30 scenes)
Psalm 119	Humanity (pope, bishop, king and others) kneel in prayer	Crucifixion, facing quad miniature across opening	Martyred saints (48 scenes—24 saints)
Canticles through Athanasian Creed	Appropriate initials (i.e. Annunciation for the *Magnificat*)	2 quad miniatures (8 Passion scenes) at start of series; 2 quad miniatures (Ascension of Christ through Assumption of the Virgin) at Nunc Dimittis; Christ enthroned facing *Gnadenstuhl* Trinity at Creed	St. Catherine of Alexandria (8 scenes); Sts. Saturninus, Andrew, Lucy, and Thomas the Apostle (2 scenes each); Thomas Becket (22 scenes); Mary Magdalene (6 scenes)
Kyrie Eleison and Litany	Humanity in prayer	Series of large framed miniatures on 16 subsequent folios	Sts. Paul (10 scenes), Margaret (1 scene, continued below
Litany continued			Margaret (13 scenes); Nicholas (8 scenes)

Chart IV: the Taymouth Hours
Developed from Baker, *Early Development*, and James, *Descriptive Catalogue*

Text	Miniatures	*Bas-de-page* scenes
Calendar	(Labors of the Month and Zodiac signs in roundels)	
Anglo-Norman prayers	Crowned woman at private mass (at incipit of prayers for Mass); Whipping of St. Catherine of Alexandria	St. "Jerome" [Jeremiah]; Samson; Unicorn; Bevis of Hampton (8 scenes); Guy of Warwick (10 scenes)—romance scenes are paired
Hours of the Holy Spirit	Crowned woman and uncrowned man with dove at incipit of Matins	Genesis (20 paintings, some paired); David and Goliath sequence (4 scenes, including interpolation or mistaken depiction of Cain and Abel); Genealogical images (standing prophets/kings holding scrolls—10 images)
Hours of the Trinity	*Gnadenstuhl* Trinity	Completion of genealogical sequence; Apostles' Creed (24 standing prophets/apostles, one per page, holding scrolls); Infancy of John the Baptist (4 scenes, paired, beginning with incipit of Vespers); Infancy of the Virgin (10 scenes, paired)
Hours of the Virgin: Matins	Mary in the Temple, facing nearly full-page Annunciation to the Virgin across the opening	Below Mary in the Temple, an angel draws water from a well and hands it to Mary; below the Annunciation, Isaiah; subsequent pages depict Enyas and the Wodewose in 15 captioned scenes, often paired; 'Jeu des dames' begins (7 scenes)
Hours of the Virgin: Lauds	Visitation	'Jeu des dames' continued (26 scenes); saints martyred (7) ending with grouped saints, facing scene of woman at prayer
Hours of the Virgin: Prime	Mary and Joseph at the Inn, at end of Lauds, facing half-page historiated initial of Nativity	Beheading of S. Anastasia below Nativity; Infancy of Christ sequence (10 scenes)
Hours of the Virgin: Terce	Adoration of the Magi	Infancy continues with Dream of the Magi below incipit, and 7 more scenes)

Chart IV (*cont.*)

Text	Miniatures	*Bas-de-page* scenes
Hours of the Virgin: Sext	Presentation in the Temple	Below incipit, Mary and Joseph searching for and finding Jesus; subsequent Ministry sequence of 5 scenes
Hours of the Virgin: None	Sermon on the Mount	Ministry sequence continues with 4 scenes; story of John the Baptist (4 scenes)
Hours of the Virgin: Vespers	Mary Magdalene washes feet of Christ	John the Baptist continued (9 scenes); Ministry begins again with expulsion of moneylenders and then Temptations (4 scenes)
Hours of the Virgin: Compline	Angels and Christ in the Desert	Third Temptation; Passion of Christ sequence (10 scenes)
	Agony in the Garden facing Betrayal of Christ across opening	Kneeling king and queen in prayer below Agony scene; mocking soldiers below betrayal
Hours of the Cross	*Incipits* accompanied by Passion miniatures from Prime to Compline (6 scenes, from Carrying of the Cross to Resurrection)	Passion (12 scenes, from discovery of the empty tomb to the Pentecost); Death of the Virgin (7 scenes); Last Judgment (6 scenes, from Resurrection of Dead to Peter leading blessed into Paradise
Gradual Psalms	Virgin presents crowned woman to the judging Christ	Torments of the Damned (7 scenes)
Litany		Torments continued (16 more scenes)
Office of the Dead	Dying man attended by priest and Devil, facing Michael and the Virgin weighing his soul across the opening	Heraldic emblem with Lion; Miracles of the Virgin (28 tales told in 56 paired scenes); Three living and Three Dead (2 paired scenes); lives of St. Francis and St. Dominic (5 scenes); hybrid/animal scenes (11); lives of Sts. Mary of Egypt, Dominic, Edward the Confessor, Peter the Martyr, Denis, and Christopher (12 scenes, some paired)

4. EXPLORING THE BORDER: THE BREVIARY OF ELEANOR OF PORTUGAL

Margaret Goehring

Sometime between 1500 and 1510, Eleanor of Portugal, the widowed queen of Dom João II, received a magnificent breviary illuminated by the some of the finest artists in the Southern Netherlands.[1] Like other luxurious manuscripts made in Flemish workshops at this time, it is sumptuously decorated on more than one hundred of its folios. The veritable cornucopia of border motifs, including life-size strewn flowers, jewels, feathers, pilgrimage badges and complex continuous narratives, was one way in which Flemish artists gave new impetus to the margin as a locus for meaning and a site for personalizing the book. Experimentation was encouraged, especially in books destined for the upper echelons of society, where patrons had highly developed appreciation for sophisticated visual rhetoric, and were conditioned

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[1] Pierpont Morgan Library, ms. 52; principal bibliography includes Vladimir Gr. Simkhovitch, "A Predecessor of the Grimani Breviary," *Burlington Magazine* 10 (1907), pp. 400–405; Thomas Kren and Scot McKendrick, *Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003), cat. 91; Brigitte Dekeyzer, *Layers of Illusion: The Mayer van den Bergh Breviary* (Ghent: Ludion, 2004), pp. 169–70; Patrick deWinter, "A Book of Hours of Queen Isabel la Católica," *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 67 (1981), pp. 342–427 (esp p. 424); William Voelkle, *The Pierpont Morgan Library: Masterpieces of Medieval Painting, the Art of Illumination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 3–4. Illuminated folios that are mentioned in this essay but not reproduced may be accessed through the Morgan Library website: http://corsair.morganlibrary.org/.

The dating of this manuscript is uncertain. Stylistically, it is in accordance with manuscripts produced in the Maximilian Master workshop around 1500; although Thomas Kren (Kren & McKendrick, 2003), p. 323 has suggested this date could be as late as 1510 based on the clothing worn by the aristocratic man in the calendar scene for March. While much of the book was completed at one time, there is evidence that later modifications were made (particularly in the frontispiece and perhaps also in the Resurrection (f. 146v), so it is possible that the calendar could have been added at a later stage.

I would like to offer my sincerest gratitude to Roger Wieck who graciously allowed me access to the Breviary. I would also like to thank Anne Margreet As-Vijvers for her help and comments on earlier drafts of this paper, as well as the editors of this volume for their excellent suggestions.

to active participation in reading and viewing.[2] At the same time, however, the high demand for devotional books resulted in production processes that favored efficiency, particularly in the Southern Netherlands.[3] This is especially true of border design, which often relied on the use of repetitive motifs.[4] Many of the borders in Dona Leonor's Breviary, as in other Ghent-Bruges manuscripts, are strictly ornamental, with no apparent direct thematic or iconographic link to the text or miniature they surround. Instead, their function is related more to the display of artistic virtuosity, offering what Anja Grebe has described as a "meta discourse on representation as well as on its boundaries."[5] On the other hand, further study reveals that even without direct thematic links to the center, many of the borders in the breviary do have a performative value, capable of engaging the viewer at various levels, including the mnemonic, the emblematic and the didactic.[6]

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[2] See James Marrow, *Pictorial Invention in Netherlandish Manuscript Illumination of the Late Middle Ages: The Play of Illusion and Meaning* (Corpus of Illuminated Manuscripts, v. 16), (eds.) Brigitte Dekeyzer and Jan van der Stock (Leuven: Peeters, 2005).

[3] The reliance of patterns is particularly manifest in manuscripts from this period; see deWinter (1981).

[4] See, for example, Anne Margreet As-Vijvers, "Recycling the *Huth Hours*: The Master of the David Scenes and the Making of the *Brukenthal Breviary*, or: The Ghent Associates and the Contribution of Simon Marmion to Ghent-Bruges Manuscript Painting" in *Manuscripts in Transition: Recycling Manuscripts, Texts and Images*, (eds.) Brigitte Dekeyzer and Jan Van der Stock (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 2005), pp. 379–90.

[5] Anja Grebe, "The Art of the Edge: Frames and Page-Design in Manuscripts of the Ghent-Bruges School" in *The Metamorphosis of Marginal Images: From Antiquity to Present Time*, (eds.) Nurith Kenaan-Kedar & Asher Ovadiah (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 2001), pp. 93–101 (esp. p. 99). See also Robert Calkins, "Sacred Image and Illusion in Late Flemish Manuscripts" in *Essays in Medieval Studies 6* (Proceedings of the Illinois Medieval Association, 1989), pp. 1–18. (http://www.illinoismedieval.org/EMS/VOL6/calkins.html); and Anne Margreet As-Vijvers, "More than Marginal Meaning? The Interpretation of Ghent-Bruges Border Decoration," *Oud Holland* 116 (2003), pp. 3–33.

[6] On the mnemonic function of Ghent-Bruges strewn flower borders, see Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann and Virginia Roehrig Kaufmann, "The Sanctification of Nature: Observations on the Origins of Trompe l'oeil in Netherlandish Book Painting of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 19 (1991), pp. 43–64, and Kathryn M. Rudy, "Margins and Memory: The Functions of Border Imagery in a Delft Manuscript" in Manuscript Studies in the Low Countries: Proceedings of the 'Groninger Codicologendagen' in Friesland, 2002, (eds.) Anne Margreet As-Vijvers, Jos. M.M. Hermans, & Gerda C. Huisman (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 2008), pp. 217–38. The interpretation of the Ghent-Bruges illusionistic border as an active site for communication and memory was first suggested by F.O. Büttner, "Ikonographisches Eigengut der Randzier in spätmittelalterlichen Handschriften.

The innovative border designs created by the Master of the "Older" Prayerbook of Maximilian I for Dona Leonor's Breviary have not been fully appreciated. Although his style dominated Ghent-Bruges manuscript production from the end of the fifteenth century and into the second decade of the sixteenth, his originality and ingenuity is sometimes overshadowed by the tendency of his workshop to rely on stock patterns and an indifferent commitment to quality, particularly among his followers. The Maximilian Master appears to have led the team of artists who produced the luxuriously decorated codex, which included principally the Master of James IV of Scotland who painted many of the historiated borders, the calendar, as well as the small miniatures in the Ferial Psalter.[7] The Master of the Prayerbooks of *c.* 1500 or an artist in his circle also made contributions (ff. 257v, 578v). Lesser hands, often of mediocre quality, can also be identified in this book that will be considered assistants to the Maximilian Master.

This breviary is useful for approaching paradoxical aspects of manuscript production around 1500 for it exhibits many of the hallmarks of Ghent-Bruges books made at this time: it is a luxurious devotional book that was made for a foreign patron with whom the artists had no direct contact. It is not known whether it was commissioned on the order of the Queen herself, or whether it was a gift to her, perhaps through the Netherlandish Hapsburg court.[8] The decoration of this

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Inhalte und Programme," *Scriptorium* 39 (1985), pp. 197–233. Emblematic function may be seen in how personal mottos and motifs were often incorporated into border design, while cloth-of-gold borders can be linked to contemporary displays of political power; see Margaret Goehring, "Taking Borders Seriously: the significance of cloth-of-gold textile borders in Burgundian and post-Burgundian manuscript illumination of the Low Countries," *Oud Holland* 119 (2006), pp. 22–40. On the use of typology as a didactic tool in Ghent-Bruges illumination, see Brigitte Dekeyzer, "Typologische creativiteit in de late middeleeuwen: de dialoog tussen Oud en Nieuw Testament in de Gents-Brugse boekverluchting," *Millennium* 17 (2003), pp. 121–44.

[7] This artist may be identified with Gerard Horenbout, court artist to Margaret of Austria; see Kren & McKendrick (2006), pp. 427–28.

[8] Perhaps given to her by Emperor Maximilian I himself; see *Feitorias: L'art au Portugal au temps des Grandes Découvertes (fin XIV^e siècle jusqu'à 1548)* (Antwerp: Vlaamse Gemeenschap, 1991), p. 65. However, Margaret of Austria is also a possibility as there is good reason to believe that she was instrumental in disseminating luxurious Flemish manuscripts throughout Europe as gifts of state; see Dagmar Eichberger, "The Culture of Gifts: A Courtly Phenomenon from a Female Perspective" in *Women of Distinction: Margaret of York/Margaret of Austria*, (ed.) Dagmar Eichberger (Leuven: Brepols, 2005), pp. 287–95; Anne-Marie Legaré, "'La librairye de Madame' Two Princesses and their Libraries" in *Women of Distinction*, pp. 207–219 (esp. p. 215); Dekeyzer (2004), pp. 178–180; Bodo Brinkmann, *Die flämische Buchmalerei am Ende des Burgunderreichs: Der Meister des Dresdener Gebetbuchs und die Miniaturisten seiner Zeit* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), p. 328.

book reveals a level of anonymity that is surprising considering its lofty patronage. The sole mark of ownership is the inserted frontispiece by the Maximilian Master that contains Eleanor's portrait and coat-of-arms. The book also has small discrepancies and errors that when combined with the relatively standard calendar attests to the volume of work within the workshop.[9] The preference for established iconographic patterns is further borne out by most of the miniatures, the compositions for which can be traced to the previous generation of illuminators, and which are repeated in a group of related manuscripts contemporary to the Breviary.[10]

The Breviary's opening miniature shows Queen Eleanor in prayer before the Virgin and Child in a church.[11] (fig. 4.1) This reflects a composition type descended from Jan Van Eyck that was frequently used in Flemish manuscripts, and is comparable to owner portraits by the Maximilian Master, the Master of James IV of Scotland, Simon Bening, the Master of Mary of Burgundy, and Hugo van der Goes.[12]

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[9] Mary Magdalene is shown in a grassy courtyard with a tower behind her (f. 448), iconography that seems to have been appropriated from depictions of Saint Barbara or Saint Agnes. Second, while effort was made to ensure that borders with ornamental text were related to their context (for example, using words from the appropriate office), one text-border appears to be nonsensical (f. 461), although this is not an uncommon feature of later Ghent-Bruges manuscripts. Last, the order of the zodiac signs for Libra and Scorpio has been switched around in the calendar, although since all of the calendars in this group of manuscripts share this mistake (some of which are listed in n. 10), this indicates the use of a model with the error; see Kren & McKendrick (2003), p. 324, n. 10.

[10] Including the Mayer van den Bergh Breviary (Antwerp, Mayer van den Bergh Museum), the Hours of Isabella the Catholic (Cleveland Museum of Art, 63.256), The Hours of Louis Quarré (Oxford: Bodleian Library ms. Douce 311), the Rothschild Hours (Christie's, London, 9 July, 1999, lot 102), and a Book of Hours in London perhaps made for a Spanish patron (British Library, Add. Ms. 35313). Having achieved a patina of authority, it seems that certain images were considered to be more suitable for veneration than others; see Robert G. Calkins (1989), esp. pp. 7–8, and Amy Powell, "A Point 'Ceaselessly Pushed Back': The Origin of Early Netherlandish Painting," *Art Bulletin* 88 (2006), pp. 540–62.

[11] It has been suggested that this miniature was moved from elsewhere in the manuscript, Kren & McKendrick (2003), p. 321. One possible location could have been between folios 352v and 353 where a miniature appears to be missing commemorating the Feast of the Conception of the Virgin. For discussion of the genesis of this iconography, see Laura D. Gelfand and Walter S. Gibson, "Surrogate Selves: the "Rolin Madonna" and the late Medieval Devotional Portrait," *Simiolus* 29 (2002), pp. 119–38.

[12] The *Vie de Saint Adrien* (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Ser. Nova 2619, f. 3v), the Hours of James IV of Scotland (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. 1897, ff. 24v–25), the *Da Costa Hours* (J. Pierpont Morgan Library m 399, f. 197v); Vienna Hours of Mary of Burgundy (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek: cod. 1857,

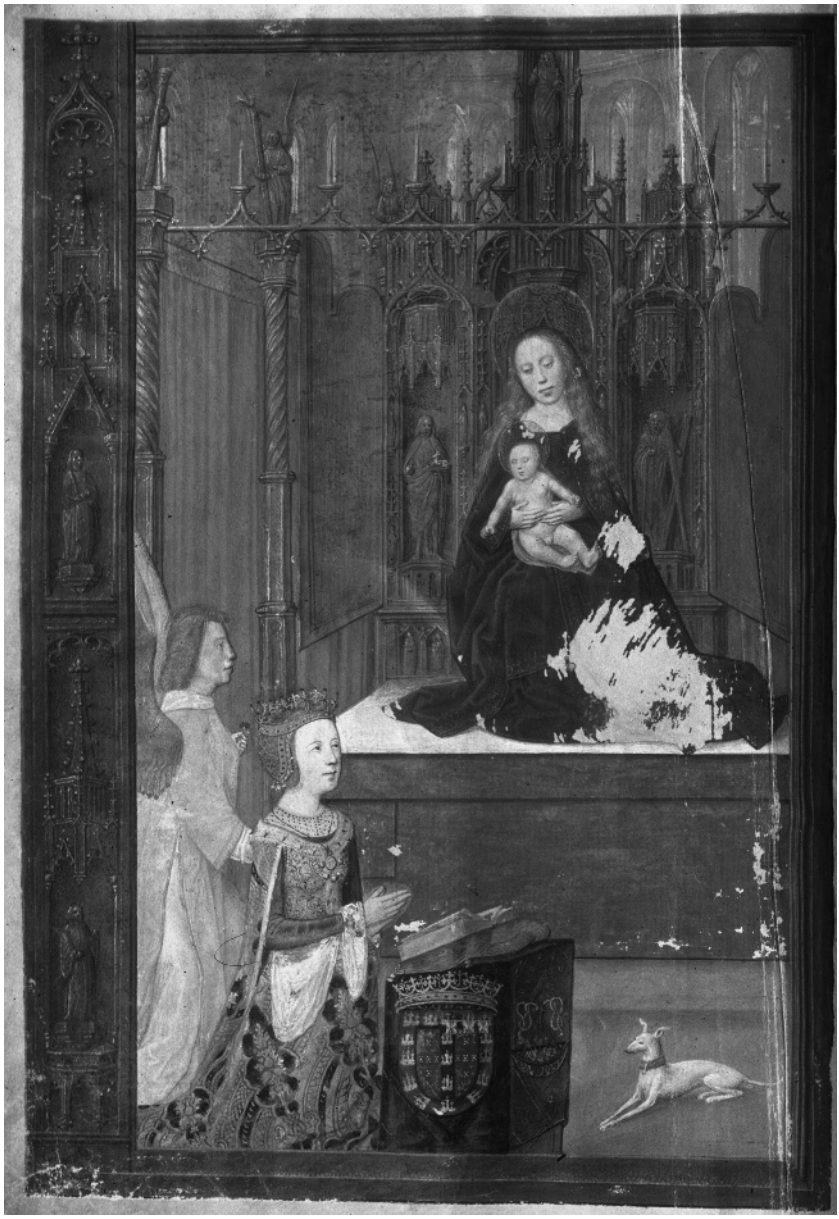

Fig. 4.1 The Master of the "Older" Prayerbook of Maximilian I, Queen Eleanor before the Virgin and Child. *Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal*, m. 52, fol. 1v. Photo: Morgan Library & Museum.

While serving as a timeless testament to the station of the owner (as evinced by her queenly attributes, luxurious clothing, and heraldic markers), her perpetually prayerful pose and privileged position vis-à-vis the Virgin and Child may be seen as tributes to her piety and devotion. At the same time, given the lack of specificity and distinctly individualized features, this is clearly a state portrait that presents Dona Leonor's person rather than her appearance. That this is an image rather than a view is further underscored by the architectural framework of the border that makes our relationship to the miniature ambiguous—are we looking through a window or a door, or, given the flat frontality of the scene, at a picture? Overall, the miniature belongs to a well-known iconographic formula that was associated particularly with the closely entwined courtly circles of Portugal, Spain and the Netherlands, and indeed, at one level probably served as a convenient marker commemorating the familial ties that bound these courts together.

Some of the folios in the breviary are distinguished for their innovative and experimental qualities in negotiating the relationship between miniature and border, particularly through the use of historiation and continuous narrative. While more scholarly attention has focused on continuous narrative in panel painting, it is within manuscript illumination that this compositional device achieved its richest expression.[13]

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f. 14v), and Hugo van der Goes' *Trinity Altarpiece* (National Gallery of Scotland, NG 1772). It is also the basis for at least one Portuguese portrait of Dona Leonor (Book of Hours, Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional ms. 166).

[13] The term "continuous narration" in the visual arts is a vague designation for a range of complex images that seek to show multiple temporal moments within a single spatial setting. The most comprehensive study is Lew Andrews, *Story and Space in Renaissance Art: The Rebirth of Continuous Narrative* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), although he focuses on panel painting. For manuscript illumination, see Kurt Weitzmann, *Illustrations in Roll and Codex: A Study of the Origin and Method of Text Illustration* (Princeton University Press, 1947, 2nd ed. 1970); Sixten Ringbom, "Some Pictorial Conventions for the Recounting of Thoughts and Experiences in Late Medieval Art" *Medieval Iconography and Narrative: A Symposium* (Odense University Press, 1980), pp. 38–69; and Natalie Crohn "Continuous narration in the Holkham Bible Picture Book and Queen Mary's Psalter," *Word and Image* 20/2 (2004), pp. 123–37.

Multiple-folio continuous narration sequences are commonly employed in manuscript illumination, such as the ubiquitous Infancy cycle that illustrates the Hours of the Virgin. A close relationship developed between such cycles and panel painting, as can be seen, for example, in Simon Bening's *Stein Quadriptych* in the Walters Art Museum. M. Kupfer-Tarasulo, "Innovation and Copy in the Stein Quadriptych of Simon Bening," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 42 (1979), pp. 274–98. However, Lynn Ransom, in a series of unpublished conference papers, has questioned whether these

Continuous narrative is particularly suited to the manuscript context because a codex, unlike a panel painting, is a visual object that must be experienced through time as the reader turns pages. Moreover, because the manuscript may be engaged either sequentially or, as in the case of the breviary, non-sequentially, single-folio continuous narration images offer a framework by which experience of the manuscript may be organized; for example, as a means to mark particularly important sections. But as Dona Leonor's breviary also demonstrates, continuous narrative borders were used to offer a temporal aspect to an iconic miniature or devotional text, and to create a mnemonic framework for remembering saintly vitae or biblical stories. The multiple functions of these borders is paralleled by the variety of innovative spatial strategies that they display. These include narratives comprised of multiple events set within cohesive settings that are distinct from the central miniature or text block (fols. 33, 141, 258), border scenes set continuously with a central miniature that may or may not show different moments in time (fols. 517v, 140v), as well as narrative borders that are non-continuous with the central miniature either spatially, temporally or even thematically (fols. 32v, 257v, 411v, 398v).

Continuous narrative borders emerged out of Gothic marginalia imagery, which, over the course of the fourteenth century, began to coalesce into coherent sequences of images. Artists such as Jean Pucelle and the Master of Jean de Sy further enriched the dialogue between the margin and the miniature through their experimentations with perspective and three-dimensional modeling.[14] The play between the miniature, margin and bas-de-page reached a zenith in the early fifteenth century, particularly in France.[15] With the rise of the Burgundian state after the close of the Hundred Years' War such experimentation in the borders declined, although continuous narration

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images were intended to be viewed simultaneously as an altarpiece, suggesting instead that they were a sequence of separate images within a devotional book context.

[14] As seen in the Hours of Jeanne D'Evreux (Cloisters) and the Missal of Saint Denis (Victoria & Albert Museum ms. 1346–1891, f. 261); see also James Marrow, "Symbol and Meaning in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance," *Simiolus* 16 (1986), pp. 158–59, and John White, *The Birth and Rebirth of Pictorial Space* (London: Faber & Faber, 1957), ch. 15.

[15] A particularly interesting example of such play appears in the Carrying of the Cross miniature in a French book of Hours of *c.* 1435 for the use of Toul by the Master of Pommersfelden 351 (Tenschert coll, f. 7v); see also E. Spencer, *The Sobieski Hours: A Manuscript in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle* (London: Academic Press, 1977).

continued to be used for the illustration of historical chronicles.[16] A new interest in the border as a carrier of narrative imagery began to reappear by the third quarter of the century, as seen in the work of Lieven van Lathem and the Master of Mary of Burgundy.[17] Now artists could represent both space and time in remarkably dynamic and fluid ways, as seen particularly in the oeuvres of the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook, the Master of the David Scenes in the Grimani Breviary, the Master of James IV of Scotland, and Simon Bening.[18]

Many of the continuous narrative borders in Dona Leonor's Breviary may be linked to the personal interests of the Queen, and were painted by the Maximilian Master himself or in conjunction with the Master of James IV of Scotland. Dona Leonor was a discerning patroness who was well versed in Franciscan devotional practices and theology as well as knowledgeable of the artistic currents of her time, particularly those of the Low Countries.[19] After her husband's death in 1495 without a direct heir (resulting in the elevation of her brother, Manuel I, to the throne), Dona Leonor became more devoutly involved with the Franciscans, joining as a tertiary in 1503. She founded numerous reli-

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[16] Particularly in the work of the Master of Jean Mansel; see Lisa Deam, "Mapping the Past: the *Fleur des Histoires* (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, ms. 9231–9232) in the Context of Fifteenth-Century Burgundian Historiography" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2001), esp. pp. 31–36.

[17] Such as the *Chroniques de Hainaut* (Brussels Bibliothèque Royale ms. 9242, f. 156), the Hours of Charles the Bold (J. Paul Getty Museum ms. 37), f. 119v, and most especially the Hours of Mary of Burgundy (Österreichische Nationalbibliothek Cod. 1857), ff. 14v and 43v.

[18] Bodo Brinkmann, "Fitzwilliam 1058–1975 and the 'Capriccio' in Flemish book illustration" *Fifteenth-Century Flemish Manuscripts in Cambridge Collections: Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* 10/2 (1992), pp. 203–14; Elizabeth Morrison, "Iconographic Originality in the Oeuvre of the Master of the David Scenes," *Flemish Manuscript Painting in Context: Recent Research* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2006), pp. 149–61.

[19] Dona Leonor donated several panel paintings by Flemish artists to the Madre de Deus convent, including the *Jerusalem Altarpiece* (Lisbon: Museu Nacional do Azulejos; see below). She also owned a book of hours attributed to the workshop of Willem Vrelant (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional ms. Illum. 165) and a Ghent-Bruges style book of hours (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional ms. ill. 166); See also João Ameal, *Dona Leonor: Princesa Perfeitíssima* (Porto: Livraria Tavares Martins, 1968); *Feitorias: L'art au Portugal au temps des Grandes Découvertes* (1991); Sylvie Deswarte, *Les enluminures de la Leitura Nova 1504–1552: etude sur la culture artistique au Portugal au temps de l'humanisme* (Paris: Fundação Gulbenkian, 1977); Reinaldo dos Santos, "Dona Leonor e a Arte" *Coloquio: revista de artes e letras* 1 (1959), pp. 3–7; Vitor Serrao, "O mecenato da Rainha D. Leonor e a pintura de corte" *Oceanos* 8 (1991), pp. 104–109; Reynaldo Dos Santos, *O Livro de Horas da Rainha Dona Leonor* (Lisbon, 1959) and *Casa Perfetisssima: 500 Anos da Fundação do Mosteiro da Madre de Deus* (Museu Nacional do Azulejo, 2010).

gious institutions and charitable organizations in Lisbon, Coimbra, Caldas das Rainhas and elsewhere, including the first *Misericordia* of Lisbon, which she founded in 1498. She also founded a Poor Claire's convent, the *Madre de Deus*, in 1509 where she resided until the end of her life. It was to this convent that most of her significant library was donated.[20] In addition to owning a substantial number of manuscripts, many of which were related to Franciscan spirituality, she was an important patron of her country's nascent printing industry. She ordered the first book to be published in Portugal, Ludolph of Saxony's *Vita Christi*, along with other significant works including the *Bosco Deleitoso Solitario*, and Christine de Pizan's *Livre de Trois Virtus* that had been translated into Portuguese on the order of her great-aunt Queen Isabel, wife of Alfonso V of Portugal, in 1455.[21]

As mentioned above, historiated borders became more common as a means of organizing the manuscript by the early sixteenth century, an observation that is borne out by Dona Leonor's Breviary in which such borders help mark some of the most important sections. These include the opening of the Ferial Psalter, Easter and Christmas in the Temporale, and the commemorations of Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Anthony of Padua and the Invention of the Cross in the Sanctorale. The amplification of the narratives on these particular folios is also consistent with the function of continuous narrative as a tool for activating memory, particularly in their use of architecture, which was an important visual device in mnemonic techniques going back to antiquity.[22] In the illuminations at the opening of the Ferial Psalter, architecture acts to organize, frame and separate the individual episodes. (figs. 4.2, 4.3) The Prayerbook Master painted the miniature of King David in Prayer, as well as the historiated border with scenes relating to the battle with Goliath, both of which correspond to well-known compositional formulae.[23] While the setting of the central miniature

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[20] Isabel Vilares Cepeda, "Os Livros da Rainha D. Leonor Segundo o códice 11352 da Bibliotheca Nacional, Lisboa" *Revista da Biblioteca Nacional Lisboa* ser. 2, vol. 2 (1987), pp. 51–81.

[21] Charity Cannon Willard, "A Portuguese Translation of Christine de Pisan's Livre des trois vertus" *PMLA* 78 (1963), pp. 459–64.

[22] Andrews (1995), pp. 26–29 and especially Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), esp. pp. 122–52.

[23] Parallels can be found in a book of hours in Krakow, Czartoryski Museum, ms. 3025, p. 418, the Berlin Hours of Mary of Burgundy (Berlin Kupferstichkabinett 78 B 12, f. 190v), the Mayer van den Bergh Breviary, f. 20v, the Spinola Hours (J. Paul Getty

Fig. 4.2 The Master of the Prayerbooks of *c.* 1500, Scenes from the Life of King David, *Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal*, m. 52, fol. 257v. Photo: Morgan Library & Museum.

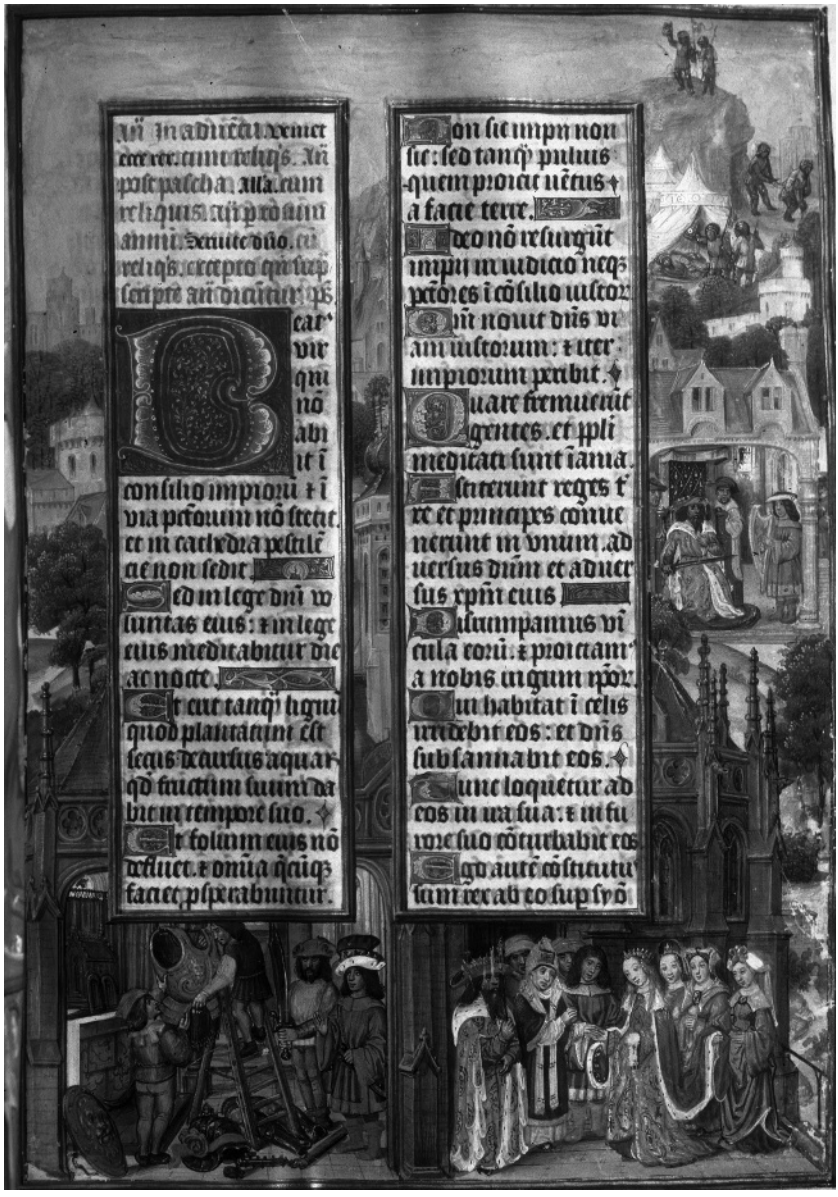

Fig. 4.3 The Master of James IV of Scotland (Horenbout?), Scenes from the Life of King David, *Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal*, m. 52, fol. 258. Photo: Morgan Library & Museum.

displays typically a Flemish architectural idiom, the artist inserted conspicuous features to clearly identify the location as being Jerusalem.[24] A round tower referring to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher has been added to the stepped gable palace in the background, while the two bronze-colored columns, Boaz and Jachin, are just to the right of King David. The James IV Master painted scenes from David's subsequent life in the historiated border on the opposite folio, however, his composition is entirely unique. The juxtaposition of the seemingly cohesive space of the border with the text block that seems superimposed on top has been described as "aesthetically jarring."[25] However, the disruption of spatial logic may have been intentional, as a means to provoke attention. The organization of the spatial units in which the various vignettes are placed is not consistent; it is not a landscape through which one could physically travel. Instead, the arrangement of architectural and landscape units have more to do with cognitive clarity than with any inherent visual logic. In other words, the border has been conceived as a space that should be read slowly rather than apprehended with a glance. The use of architecture to establish temporal divisions and to provide narrative organization (rather than logical spatial organization) in order to guide viewing can be traced back to compositional devices found in Burgundian historical chronicles.[26] At the same time, it also corresponds to the culture of empathetic devotion that utilized mnemonic techniques of architectonic structuring.[27]

It is in the context of empathetic devotion that the Crucifixion miniature in Dona Leonor's Breviary should be viewed. (fig. 4.4) The general pattern for the composition entered into Ghent-Bruges illuminators' repertory through the Berlin Hours of Mary of Burgundy.[28]

Museum, ms. Ludwig IX 18, f. 166). A drawing of this historiated border pattern is in Paris, École des Beaux-Arts, nr. 2670.

[24] Depicting Jerusalem using local architectural idioms was a common technique and perhaps related to devotional practices as advised by Ludolf of Saxony; see Laura D. Gelfand, "Bruges as Jerusalem, Jerusalem as Bruges: Actual and Imagined Pilgrimage in Fifteenth-century Manuscript Illuminations and Paintings," *Annales d'Histoire de l'Art et d'Archéologie de l'Université libre de Bruxelles* 29 (2008), pp. 7–24.

[25] Marrow (2005), p. 15.

[26] Lisa Deam, "Landscape and History: The Miniatures of the *Fleur des Histoires* (Brussels B.R. ms. 9231–9232)" in *Regions and Landscapes, Reality and Imagination in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, (eds.) Peter Ainsworth and Tom Scott (Oxford: P. Lang, 2000), pp. 113–38.

[27] See Carruthers (1990), cf. footnote 22.

[28] Berlin Kupferstichkabinett 78 B 12, f. 150v; see Eberhard König, *Das Berliner Stundenbuch der Maria von Burgund und Kaiser Maximilians* (Berlin: Nicolai, 1998).

Fig. 4.4 The Master of the "Older" Prayerbook of Maximilian I, Crucifixion, *Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal*, m. 52, fol. 140v. Photo: Morgan Library & Museum.

The Maximilian Master has changed the pattern to present the scene as an altarpiece complete with architectonic framework so that the margins appear to be the wings and predella sections. Yet the illusion is not consistently maintained. The thief on the left is cut off slightly suggesting a world beyond the frame, whereas the figure on the right is boxed in by its frame, which, based on its shape and angle below the scene, suggests that this is an image painted on a wing that is turning slightly inward. Prophets with banderoles occupy the spaces on either side of the Casting of Lots, but while the left figure seems to stand within its Gothic niche, the right figure appears to be seated in front of the framework of the triptych above. Similarly, the setting of the Crucifixion scene is spatially ambiguous. The landscape setting is relatively continuous, but the manner in which figures in the central miniature are cut off by the frame shows that the space is not actually logical. Even the architectural components of this 'triptych' are not consistent. This spatial ambiguity interrupts any attempt to read this image as real. Instead, the image indexically reinforces acknowledgment of its own manufacture, paralleling strategies by panel painters to enforce the meditative properties of their images.[29] The conception of the picture plane as a mirror of the world without necessarily being mimetic is a technique that pervades much of the illusionistic painting by Ghent-Bruges illuminators beginning in the 1470s.[30] The ambiguity of the Crucifixion miniature heightens the dual perception of the scene as a memorial and a miraculous vision, borrowing a concept that was introduced by the Master of Mary of Burgundy in the Vienna

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The Master of Mary of Burgundy experimented with night settings in two miniatures for the *Hours of Engelbert of Nassau* (Oxford: Bodleian Library ms. Douce 219, ff. 45 and 56v), so it is possible that he may have also painted a dark Crucifixion that has not survived.

[29] Powell (2006), pp. 716–24; Alfred Acres, "The Columba Altarpiece and the Time of the World," *Art Bulletin* LXXX (1998), pp. 422–51.

[30] The dichotomy between vision and reality, or vision and narrative, is a thread found elsewhere in Ghent-Bruges illumination, particularly the work of the Master of the Dresden Prayerbook. In the *'Voustre Demeure' Hours* (divided between Madrid: Biblioteca Nacional Vit. 25–5 and Berlin: Kupferstichkabinett 78 B 13), the Hours of the Cross opens with an extraordinary set of images; see Brinkmann (1997), Abb. 172, 173. Even the archetypal illusionistic border, the strewn flower border, also has an inherent ambiguity in that trompe l'oeil effects such as botanical accuracy, modeling, and cast shadows are invariably mitigated by unrealistic juxtapositions in scale and the use of ornamental acanthus; see comments by Grebe (2001), pp. 93–94.

Hours of Mary of Burgundy.[31] The Burgundy Master's miniature of the Nailing to the Cross (fol. 43v) offers a dialectic between narrative and memory.[32] Found at the opening the Hours of the Cross, such a spot would normally be occupied by a Crucifixion scene, which indeed does appear on the open page of the prayer-book painted in the border. This sets up an expectation that the reader would visually move back and forth between the two images. The mnemonic function of the page is further augmented by statues representing typological parallels that frame the central miniature both literally and figuratively. In contrast, for Dona Leonor's Crucifixion miniature, the Maximilian Master has done away with the indirect references to the physical presence of the viewer found in the border of the Vienna Hours, to instead engage her directly, much in the same way he altered his model for Queen Eleanor's portrait miniature so that she engages an altarpiece come to life. Moreover, an active engagement with the page is clearly expected as is shown by the use of inscription (taken from Psalm 21:19) and the complex spatiality of the miniature that underscores the multiple functions of the image. It is both temporal narrative in accordance with the Gospel account as witnessed by the dark sky and the specific setting, and timeless *andachtsbild*, as suggested by its framing and the typological references of the inscriptions.

The particular emphasis placed on the cross elsewhere in Dona Leonor's breviary is appropriate to the queen's strong Franciscan leanings. Both principal feasts for the cross are illustrated with miniatures. The feast of the Exaltation of the Cross (f. 501) is accompanied by a small miniature of Heraclius carrying the cross and a decorated border of 'embroidered' text on a textile ground, the words of which are loosely based on the opening lines of the office. Such a direct connection between center and margin is not seen, however, in the second miniature that shows St. Helen testing the Cross. (fig. 4.5) This scene is unusual not only for its strange iconography (cobbled out of elements taken from other contexts, most notably the Raising of

[31] Österreichische Nationalbibliothek cod. 1857, f. 14v and 43v; see Eric Inglis, *The Hours of Mary of Burgundy, Codex Vindobonensis 1857 Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek* (London: Harvey Miller, 1995). On the function of art to stimulate miraculous vision, see Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-Up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting* (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1984), pp. 11–22.

[32] Clark Hulse, *The Rule of Art: Literature and Painting in the Renaissance* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 48–51.

Fig. 4.5 The Master of the "Older" Prayerbook of Maximilian I, Testing of the True Cross, *Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal*, m. 52, fol. 398v. Photo: Morgan Library & Museum.

Lazarus and Burial scenes associated with the Office of the Dead), but also for its strange border that would appear to have no relationship to the miniature. The subject of an aristocratic boating party is one that is normally associated with the month of May in calendar cycles, as indeed occurs in this manuscript. It is possible that this was either a mistake, or exigency on the part of the workshop, perhaps making use of a partially completed calendar page. However, the arched frame of the miniature was not a format traditionally used in calendar layouts. The choice of the border may instead have been inspired by the date on which the Feast of the Invention of the Cross was celebrated, the 3rd of May, making this subject appropriate from a chronological standpoint if not from a thematic one. The aristocratic boating party as a border design does appear in other manuscripts associated with the Maximilian Master and his workshop. For example, in the Hours of Louis Quarré, the boating party is part of a more complex historiated border showing the Hebrews receiving manna from heaven, and is used to surround a prayer to the Blessed Sacrament.[33] As this feast could be celebrated anytime between May 21 and June 24, the chronological link is justified, but in this case, it is further supported by the clear typological parallel of the feast to the Israelites receiving manna.[34]

The next miniature of Franciscan interest is of St. Francis of Assisi, but this showcases a different relationship with its border. (fig. 4.6) For the most part, miniatures of Saint Francis produced by the Maximilian Master's workshop show the saint receiving the stigmata with an accompanying border that can display a variety of motifs, most commonly peacock feathers.[35] For this manuscript, the Maximilian Master has created a much more complex image. We are invited to meditate on the stigmata that the saint displays for us as he points to the border

[33] Oxford: The Bodleian Library, ms. Douce 311, fol. 30v.

[34] However, as is often the case, this border lost its meaning over time. For example, in the *Da Costa Hours* (J. Pierpont Morgan Library m. 399) this border surrounds the miniature of St. Mark (f. 119v) that accompanies the Gospel reading. In this instance, no thematic or chronological link can be determined, suggesting that by this point it was strictly ornamental. As similar loss of significance can also be found in the cloth-of-gold border; see Goehring (2006), pp. 35–36.

[35] Peacock feathers are associated with Saint Francis in both the Grimani Breviary (fol. 756v) and the Rothschild Hours (fol. 225v). This border may have been intended as an allusion to the notion that Saint Francis was a typological parallel to Christ. It was believed that the flesh of the peacock did not to decay, and therefore was an appropriate symbol of Christ. In other Ghent-Bruges manuscripts, peacock feathers are associated with the Annunciation or the Ascension, as occurs here (fol. 170v).

Fig. 4.6 The Master of the "Older" Prayerbook of Maximilian I, Saint Francis of Assisi, *Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal*, m. 52, fol. 517v. Photo: Morgan Library & Museum.

where he is shown receiving them. Both scenes are set in a continuous landscape that, in approved rhetorical fashion, allows the viewer to recognize this as a historical event set at a specific time, place and season.[36] At the same time, the shifting scales alter the perception of the continuous landscape, which the viewer reads as simultaneously 'far away' and 'close up.' The frame is superimposed on this landscape and is in turn overlapped by the border figure, all of which serve to break the temporal-spatial continuum, segregating the central figure within a more timeless realm. Like the Crucifixion miniature discussed earlier, this image is at once temporal and static, its border and miniature working together to invite us to contemplate the stigmata both as *ystoria* and *ymage*, narrative and icon. In underscoring its iconicity, the image effectively offers Saint Francis as a typological parallel to Christ, an identification with which Eleanor would no doubt have been aware.[37] Among the inventory of her manuscripts at the Madre de Deus convent was included a copy of Bartholomeus de Pisa's *Liber de conformitate vitae beati Francisci ad vitam Domini Jesu*, a highly influential text explicating the theology of *Franciscus alter Christus*.[38]

Another didactic theme that appears in Dona Leonor's Breviary concerns the two poles of Christian life, the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa*. This appears, for example, in the miniatures dedicated to St. Anthony of Padua. (figs. 4.7, 4.8) The bi-folium illustrates the vita of the saint, anchored by a large miniature representing his most famous miracle of the donkey.[39] Rather than showing the other miracles associated with Saint Anthony, the historiated borders instead illustrates more prosaic events from his life. The verso side displays Anthony taking leave of the Augustinian monks at Coimbra, adopting

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[36] On landscape description as argumentum, see Ernst R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, (trans.) Willard Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 193–94.

[37] See Henk W. van Os, "Saint Francis of Assisi as a second Christ in early Italian Painting," *Simiolus* 7 (1974), pp. 115–32.

[38] Cepeda (1987), p. 58.

[39] The miniature itself is linked to a composition used in the workshop of Gerard David, however it is likely that it originated in illuminators' circles rather than panel painting; Hans J. Van Miegroet, *Gerard David* (Antwerp: Mercatorfonds, 1989), pp. 314–16. On the iconography of Saint Anthony of Padua, see B. Kleinschmidt *Antonius von Padua in Leben und Kunst, Kult und Volkstum* (Dusseldorf: L. Schwann, 1931) and Edwin Buijsen, "Drowned or Murdered? A New Interpretation of a Miracle by St. Anthony of Padua by Gerard David," *Hoogsteder-Naumann Mercury* 7 (1988), pp. 4–11, esp. p. 10, n. 2.

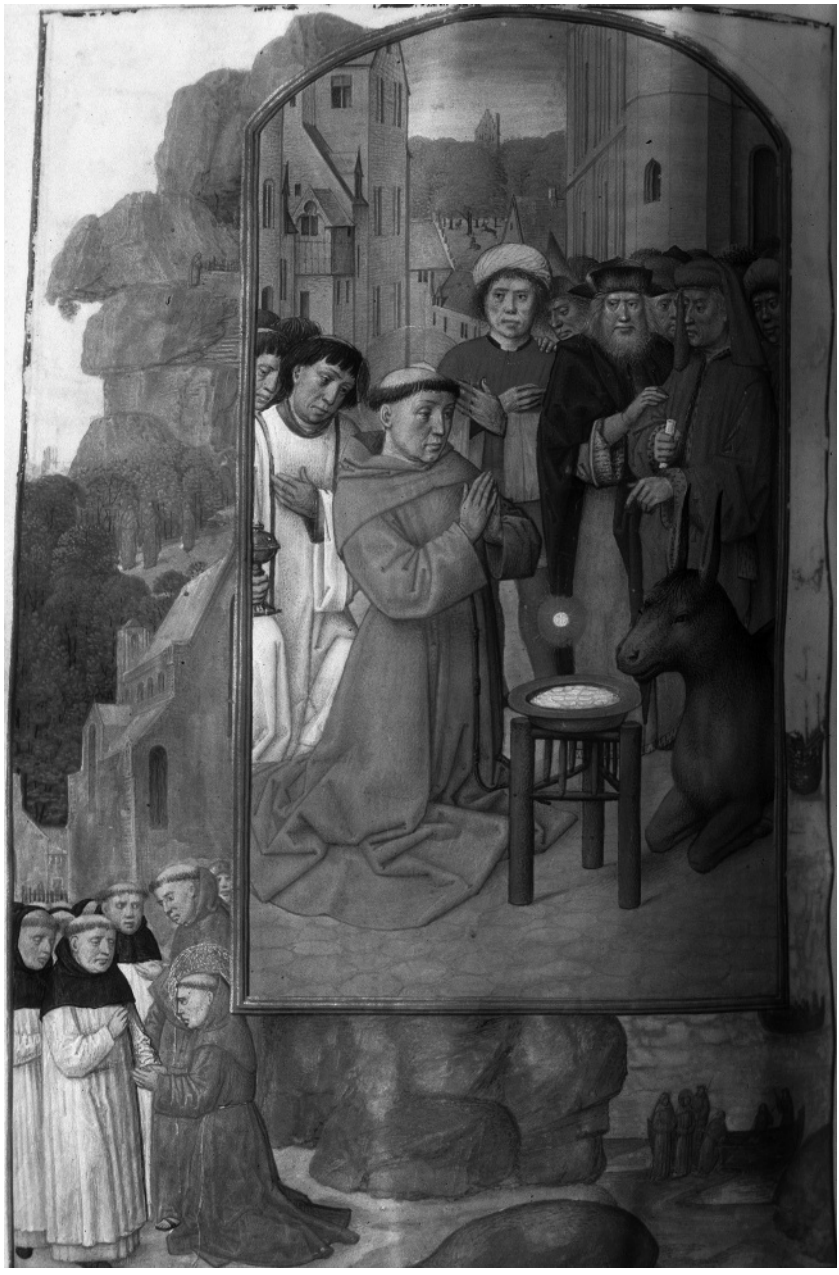

Fig. 4.7 The Master of the "Older" Prayerbook of Maximilian I, Saint Anthony of Padua, *Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal*, m. 52, fol. 411v. Photo: Morgan Library & Museum.

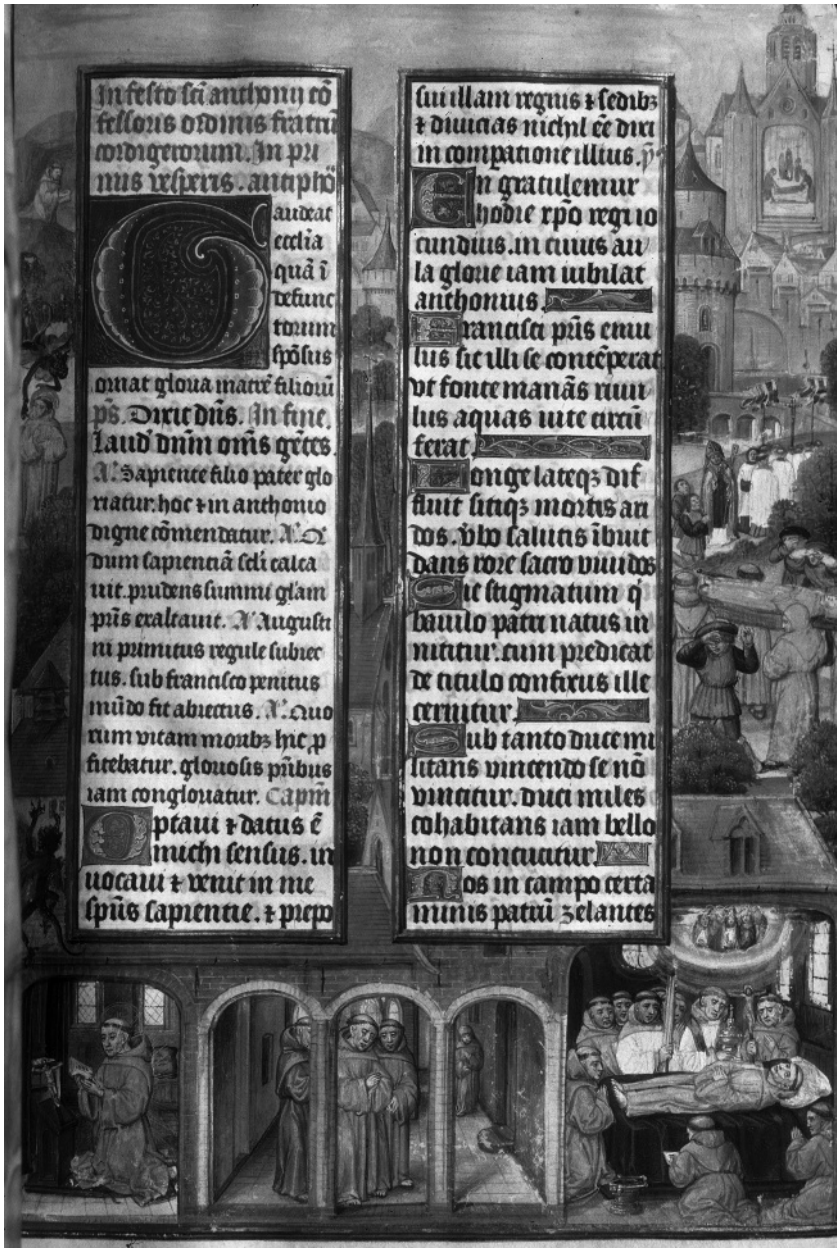

Fig. 4.8 The Master of James IV of Scotland (Horenbout?), Scenes from the Life of Saint Anthony of Padua, *Breviary of Eleanor of Portugal*, m. 52, fol. 412. Photo: Morgan Library & Museum.

the habit of the Friars Minor, and setting sail in the hopes of converting Saracens and achieving glorious martyrdom. The setting of prominent and sparsely vegetated rocks, seascape and distant town is a type sporadically used by this workshop, which tended to prefer more verdant or urbanized settings. This was perhaps a deliberate choice, for the landscape is based on a type the Maximilian Master used for images of St. James Major, and therefore might have been considered suitable for evoking the environment of the Iberian Peninsula.[40] The recto side shows St. Anthony's retreat and death at Vercelli and the translation of his relics to the Cathedral at Padua thirty years later, skipping his career of prolific sermonizing. The two borders together reference mission and spiritual retreat, and are compositions that are unique in this school of illumination. In addition to being a *hystoria* of the life of the saint, these borders are also a visual essay on the twin poles of the Christian life, the *vita activa* (as illustrated by his voyage) and the *vita contemplativa* (as illustrated by his retreat). While the latter approach had been valued more highly in the Middle Ages, there was a greater effort in the Renaissance to reconcile the two poles, using arguments extending from the writings and sermons of St. Augustine.[41] In this way, the bi-folium acts as a memory space, linking both the contemplative and active aspects of St. Anthony's vita while displaying him as an exemplar to the Queen for whom these two themes of retreat in spiritual contemplation and pilgrimage to the Holy Land were particularly resonant.[42] In addition to her personal investment and commitment to the *Madre de Deus* convent, Dona Leonor's interest in secluded contemplation is reflected in her sponsoring of the printing of the *Bosco Deleitoso Solitaria.*[43] This text, written by an anonymous Portuguese monk in the late fourteenth century is based largely on Petrarch's *de Vita Solitaria*. The text takes the form of a journey by the Penitent Sinner through a "delightful wood" in which he meets

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[40] I.e. Mayer van den Bergh Breviary, f. 489v.

[41] Paul G. Kuntz, "Practice and theory: civic and spiritual virtues in Plotinus and Augustine" in *Arbeit, Musse, Meditation: Betrachtungen zur Vita activa und Vita contemplative*, (ed.) Brian Vickers (Zürich: Verlag der Fachvereine, 1985), pp. 65–86. St. Augustine's writings were represented in Dona Leonor's library (cf. n. 20).

[42] Kate Lowe, "Rainha D. Leonor of Portugal's patronage in Renaissance Florence and cultural exchange" in *Cultural Links between Portugal and Italy in the Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 225–48, esp. 241.

[43] Auguso Magne, *Boosco deleitoso; edição do texto de 1515*, Dicionário medieval e clássico da língua portuguêsa.2. série: Textos críticos, 2 (Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Nacional do Livro, 1951).

various characters, including the hermit Dom Francesco (Petrarch). Dona Leonor's interest in pilgrimage, particularly in regards to the Holy Land, is also well documented, even though it is not known if she went on any journeys herself.[44] Indeed, the manuscript makes explicit reference to pilgrimage in the badge-filled border surrounding the Feast of the Conception of the Virgin (fol. 353); however, these cannot be taken as evidence of any pilgrimages that Dona Leonor might have taken because most of the badges are either well-known designs that were commonly repeated in Ghent-Bruges illumination, or are unspecified and generic.[45]

There is also evidence that she practiced mental pilgrimage, which may be why the continuous narrative structure appears so often in her manuscript. Among the more remarkable works that remained at the *Madre de Deus* convent after her death was an altarpiece showing the Passion in continuous narrative format within a unified landscape setting that was painted by an anonymous Flemish artist between 1495 and 1500.[46] (fig. 4.9) The growing popularity of continuous narrative has been connected in part to the ideal of *Imitatio Christi* and linked to the rise of pilgrimage as a private devotional practice.[47] As the desire to earn plenary indulgences was reaching a fever pitch, the demand for more accessible alternatives to Rome and Jerusalem emerged, such as local peregrination routes. For example, a plenary indulgence was

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[44] Dona Leonor owned a copy of Marco Polo and Bartholomeus Anglicus' *Proprietatibus Rerum*; Cepeda (1987), pp. 64–65 (cf. n. 20). Although it is not listed in the inventory of her library, it is also possible she may have known of Bernhard von Breydenbach's *Perengrinatio in Terram Sanctam* (Mainz, 1486 and translated into Spanish by 1498) as it informs the architectural details of her Jerusalem Altarpiece; see below.

[45] The majority of the badges, when they can be identified at all, relate to the Virgin; see Hanneke van Asperen, *Net (Niet) Echt: Het Insigne als Margemotief* (Ph.D. diss., Radbout Universiteit Nijmegen, 2010), pp. 131–182. I would like to offer Dr. Van Asperen my sincerest gratitude for sharing this chapter in advance of its publication with me. The function of the border seems instead to underscore particular devotion to the Virgin, which is appropriate to the context of the prayer, and also accords with the tradition for the placement of such borders (i.e. *Hours of Engelbert of Nassau* (Bodleian Library ms. Douce 219, f. 16v).

[46] Museu Nacional do Azulejo inv. n.s.n; see Marie-Leopoldine Lievens-de Waegh, *Le Musée National d'art Ancien et le Musée National des Carreaux de Faience de Lisbonne (Les Primitifs Flamands, I. Corpus de la Peinture des Anciens Pays-Bas Meridionaux au Quinzieme Siècle 16)* (Brussels: Centre national de recherches "Primitifs Flamands," 1991), cat. 165, pp. 46–105. The portrait of Dona Leonor in her habit was added later.

[47] Andrew (1995), pp. 28–32.

Fig. 4.9 Anonymous Southern Netherlandish artist, *Dona Leonor's Jerusalem Altarpiece*. Photo: Museu Nacional dos Azulejos, Lisbon.

attached to pilgrimages made to the principal churches of Malines in 1450 for the benefit of those who could not journey to Rome in that Jubilee Year.[48] Manuals that described how one could earn the indulgences of Rome at home also addressed this demand, and picture cycles themselves could be used in this manner, particularly those depicting the seven Principal churches of Rome.[49] There is evidence that some works were created as memorials to pilgrimages that had

[48] Richard Vaughn, *Philip the Good: The Apogee of Burgundy* (Rochester: Boydell Press, 2004), pp. 215–16.

[49] Henri Defoer, "Images as Aids for Earning the Indulgences of Rome" in *Tributes in Honor of James H. Marrow: Studies in Painting and Manuscript Illumination of the Late Middle Ages and Northern Renaissance*, (eds.) Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Anne S. Korteweg (London/Turnhout: Harvey Miller, 2006), pp. 163–71.

been taken.[50] More common, however, were works that acted as mnemonic devices to aid in meditation and mental pilgrimage.[51] Dona Leonor's altarpiece corresponds to a tradition that was popularized by Hans Memling, as seen in the *Bultync Altarpiece* (more commonly, and erroneously, known as the Joys of the Virgin Altarpiece) and the *Jerusalem Altarpiece*.[52]

Parallels between Dona Eleanor's altarpiece and Memling's *Jerusalem Altarpiece* suggest her artist had some indirect knowledge of the Bruges artist's work. Both are set in an expansive landscape dominated by a city, the buildings of which separate the various events of the Passion. Memling's altarpiece begins at a much earlier point in the Passion narrative, at the Entry into Jerusalem, and ends with the Resurrection, whereas Dona Leonor's altarpiece focuses more narrowly on the Arrest through the Entombment. Second, while Memling's altarpiece allows the viewer to visually "walk" through it, following curving paths and streets (although the illusion is by no means consistently maintained), there is virtually no interest in developing the space in Dona Leonor's altarpiece into a logical, coherent setting. No roads or alleys seem to connect the buildings and public squares. Instead, space seems to have a greater didactic function, as the architectural structures are arranged symmetrically to underscore the thematic links between specific events. Last, while both altarpieces show knowledge of patterns associated with Ghent-Bruges illumination, the imagery in Dona Leonor's altarpiece was probably also informed by pilgrim accounts, such as Bernhard von Breydenbach's *Peregrinatio in Terram Sanctam* with illustrations by Erhart Rewich.[53] These changes result in a work

[50] Such as the single-leaf of the Baptism of Christ and other scenes by the Master of the David Scenes in the Grimani Breviary in the Wallace Collection; see Kathryn M. Rudy, "A Pilgrim's Memories of Jerusalem: London, Wallace Collection M319," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* LXX ((2007), pp. 311–325); I would like to thank Dr. As-Vijvers for bringing this miniature to my attention and Dr. Rudy for graciously allowing me to read her article in advance of its publication.

[51] Andrew (1995), p. 28; Acres (1998), pp. 425–29; Peter Parshall "The Art of Memory and the Passion," *Art Bulletin* 81 (1999), pp. 456–72; and Matthew Botvinick, "The Painting as Pilgrimage: Traces of a Subtext in the work of Campin and his Contemporaries" *Art History* 15 (1992), pp. 87–118.

[52] Münich, Alte Pinakothek inv. WAF 668; Turin, Galleria Sabauda, inv. 8; Dirk De Vos, *Hans Memling: The Complete Works* (Ghent: Ludion, 1994), cat. 11, 38; Vida J. Hull, "Spiritual Pilgrimage in the Paintings of Hans Memling" in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, (eds.) Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2005), pp. 29–50.

[53] Lievens-de-Waegh (1991), cat. 165.

that shows a unique conflation of a visionary landscape and the specific landscape of the Holy Land.[54] Furthermore, Dona Leonor's altarpiece includes inscriptions that accompany each scene, underscoring the mnemonic and didactic function of the imagery. The sacramental nature of the Crucifixion is stressed by its central placement, while other sacerdotal references are prominently displayed, including the Washing of the Apostles' feet. Some of the texts have their origins in well-known hymns, which while supporting the sacerdotal nature of the imagery, are also linked to the devotional practices of pilgrims.[55] Like the historiated borders of her Breviary, this space is cognitive rather than literal. The interplay of illusion and narrative that the continuous narrative format provided found further enthusiastic reception in Portugal, as can be seen in the device's prevalent usage in later manuscripts such as the Da Costa Hours and the so-called Hours of Manuel I of Portugal.[56]

Dona Leonor's Breviary illustrates a problem common to Ghent-Bruges manuscripts made around 1500, namely the tension between the generalized and the personal. While the standardization of iconography may seem to lend a sense of anonymity to the book, it is doubtful that it was received in that light. To the contrary, it would have been intensely personal and could be imbued with a great deal of local meaning. It is by understanding the tastes and interests of the patrons that we can begin to understand how they received and appreciated such books. While its closest cousin, the Mayer van den Bergh Breviary may be a more polished and sumptuous manuscript, in comparison to Eleanor's Breviary, it reveals even less personalized iconography, suggesting it functioned, to an even greater extent, as a gift of state. Dona Leonor's book, on the other hand, reveals a workshop willing to experiment with new strategies of presenting narrative in order to engage this highly erudite queen.

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[54] Lievens-de-Waegh (1991), pp. 66–8.

[55] Lievens-de-Waegh (1991), pp. 61, 68; Lievens-de-Waegh notes that the imagery may also have been influenced, in both its lay-out and choices of episodes, by Mystery Plays, *passim*, p. 69.

[56] Pierpont Morgan Library ms. 399 and Lisbon: Museu Nacional de Arte Antigua inv. 14. The latter was begun in 1517 by Antonio da Holanda who used this format on nearly all of its illuminated folios; see Dagoberto Markl, *Livro de Horas de D. Manuel* (Lisbon: Crédito Predial Portugês & Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1983).

5. BUILDING MEANING: THE FIRST ARCHITECTURAL ALPHABET

Erika Boeckeler

> Architecture began like writing. It was at first an alphabet. A stone was stood upright and it was a letter, and each letter was a hieroglyphic, and on each of them rested a group of ideas as the capital on a pillar.
>
> —Victor Hugo, *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*[1]

What is *alphabetic* space? We often speak of *textual* space, but what happens when we consider the smallest unit of writing, the letter, as a space in which events may happen? A late fifteenth century engraved architectural alphabet—the first extant architectonic alphabet in Western art—offers a sanctuary of twenty three Gothic minuscule letters in the form of various Gothic cathedral elements, complete with interior rooms, windows, and empty corbel shelves for statuary. (fig. 5.1) These letters invite us in to linger within their little lines for a space. They prompt us to examine how letter and architecture are similarly *edificatory*, why one may so easily function as a metaphor for the other. In this marriage of alphabet with architecture, we see the very dynamics of "push me, pull you" spaces at work. Pushing letterforms into concrete structures makes manifest the very real material presence of language that shapes our world. The mapping of architectural features onto the ABC's also visually literalizes the pun of an "edifying text." Pulling architecture towards the linguistic in turn points to the ways in which church architecture—and architecture more generally—seeks to make its lessons legible to us, the ways material edifications serve edifying purposes. These ways may be architecturally determined by specific features that structure our movements through a built structure, and written texts may also shape

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[1] Victor Hugo, *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*. trans. Catherine Liu (New York: Random House, 2002), p. 162. Book Five, Chapter Two. Set appropriately in the same time period—the fifteenth century—as this alphabet's origin, Hugo's book offers one of the most extended, complex, and beautiful novelistic fusion of architecture and language.

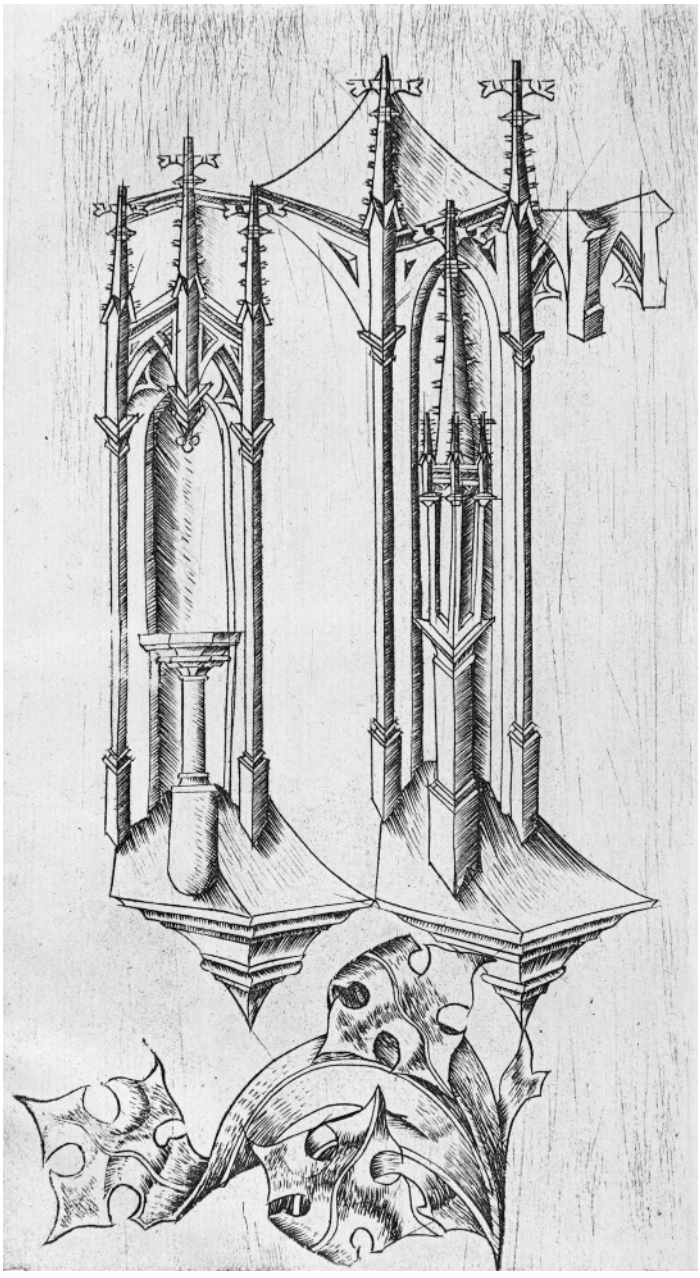

Fig. 5.1 Gothic minuscule letter *g* of the anonymous architectonic alphabet, engraving, second half of the 15th century. Photo: after Jaro Springer, *Gothic Alphabets* (London: International Chalcographical Society, 1897).

our experiences of this architecture or of themselves, as the other chapters in this volume demonstrate.[2] But push-and-pull also implies resistance: we must consider in what ways architecture and alphabets resist the merger. The engraving does considerable damage to both its buildings and its letters in forcing them together. This chapter's contribution theorizes the shared foundational premises of legible buildings and textual architectures by tracing their chiastics through late medieval religious, iconographic, architectural, and linguistic traditions.

Readers may question the payoff of thinking deeply both about an esoteric alphabet largely neglected by art historians as well as about a topic, architecture and alphabetically written language, that very few have found compelling enough to write about. And yet the stakes of that intersection are remarkably high: most, if not all, readers of this chapter interact with written texts and built structures almost every day in almost every waking minute of their lives. Both buildings and language can bring us together: one gathers people together under a single roof, the other facilitates their communication. Their mysterious combined power is perhaps nowhere expressed more evocatively than the biblical Tower of Babylon story in *Genesis*. "The Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which mortals had built. And the Lord said, "Look, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them."[3] The text implies that humans had always shared one language, but their linguistic unity never posed a threat or seemed powerful until it fused with architecture in the construction of the city and tower. Language, letters, and architecture present themselves as the hallmarks of civilization. Given that this important tale articulates its nervous reaction to the fusion as specifically *divine*, not merely human, shouldn't we care about the ways in which these two prominent life-shaping forces jointly act upon us? My expansion of this topic offers not only insight into important ideas about late fifteenth century textuality, technology, and buildings. The first architectonic alphabet puts the first finger on a particular

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[2] That texts strongly mediate our experience of buildings, often causing us to interpret architecture in ways contrary to our initial impressions is the basic thesis of Deborah Cameron and Thomas A. Markus in *The Words Between the Spaces: Buildings and Language*. (London; New York: Routledge, 2002).

[3] *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, ed. Michael D. Coogan, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), Gen 11.5–6.

spatio-linguistic vein emerging at a moment in history foundational to an understanding of our own present textual and constructed contemporary existence.

In creating an artistic alphabet, the artist must deliberately decide which alphabetic features to retain so as to make the work still recognizable as an ABC. A quick overview of the letters' build highlights which specifically alphabetical or architectural features dominate, and which constitute a melding of the two. The standout alphabetic feature is the quill stroke. With the exception of the purely organic forms (*i/j, y*, and *z*), each letter architecturally imitates the stroke made by the writing instrument's nib. (fig. 5.1) For some characters whose letterform is vague at best, (fig. 5.2) this feature strongly reinforces alphabeticity. Floating on the blank page and following more or less the contours of a calligraphic Gothic minuscule, the letters are realized as letters. In terms of architecture, the letters serve up a general inventory of late Gothic micro-architectural forms. A few key features hold special significance, in particular the suggestion of interior spaces, empty corbel shelving, the curved finials, the stiff leaf accessories, and the crisp delicacy of structure. The buildings maintain the elongated, upward thrust of Gothic edifices, and while calligraphic letters may tend towards verticality as well, here features like thin, clustered colonettes and pointed finials break open the usually closed, dark inky lines of letters and move the eye upwards. The contrast between closed alphabetic spaces and open architectural ones becomes noticeably apparent when one considers how the calligraphic quill strokes more often than not constitute the thickest, most constant, unbroken spaces in the ABC. In fact, the architecture and its empty spaces set this alphabet apart from all previous artistic alphabets, a point elaborated upon below.

Many of these "pure" architectural and alphabetical features interact with each other, for alphabets absorb all things into themselves. Some particularly important "hybrid" features result from the fusion. Rendered individually and estranged from their textual contexts as word members or even from the context of the alphabet, the precise identity of some letters may not be known outside of a full alphabet. We knew they were letters; we did not always know which ones. Only the discovery of a complete copy of the alphabet in Bologna resolved ambiguities. Just thirteen letters reside in Erlangen and a mere seven other letters total exist in additional collections. Their blank backgrounds emphasize the lack of even pretend support for the architectural structures. With no real attempt at load-bearing, architecture

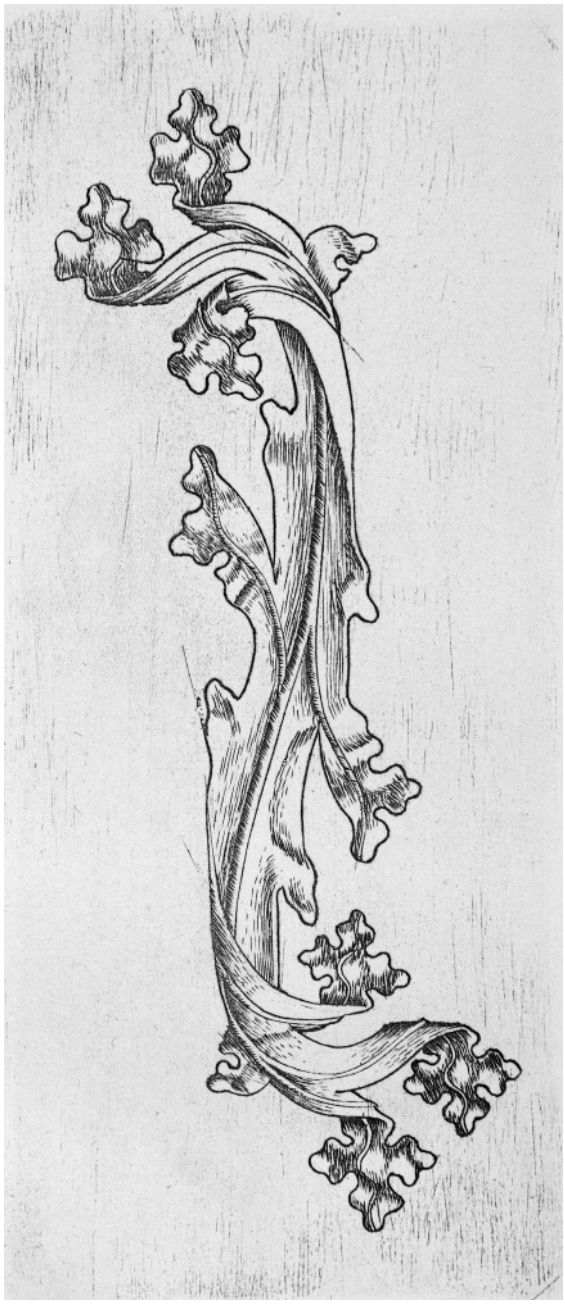

Fig. 5.2 Gothic minuscule letter *i*. Photo: after Jaro Springer, *Gothic Alphabets* (London: International Chalcographical Society, 1897).

floats in space; chunks of features have been tacked onto each other, sometimes quite unceremoniously (as in *c*, fig. 5.3). Confused shading and perspective characterize the characters, a phenomenon which—but for the dramatic extremity here—may be put down partly to poor artistry, and partly to a late medieval sensibility. Light shines generally from the left. Even as the chunks harmonize together as a whole, the aesthetic of the fragment dominates in many of the letters. Stiff-leaf flourishes sprout from nearly every letter as if in metaphorical response to the generative architectural fusion. Three letters, *i, y*, and *z*, consist entirely of leaves, and the *x* is a crossbreed of half building, half stalk. (figs. 5.2, 5.4) Such hybridity evokes the fluidity of boundary between organic, architectural, and alphabetic matter.

Lastly, the dimensions of the letters point to a compromise feature. The set in Bologna preserves the original layout of the letters where they spread across eight quarto sheets with three letters per page (e.g. abc, def, ghi). In Erlangen, they fall on twenty-three quarto sheets with each letter on its own page; the widest letter (*m*) measures around 16 cm, the narrowest (*l*) measures only about 5.5 cm, the tallest letter (*h*) spans approximately 25.5 cm, and the shortest letters (*r* and *s*) each around 16.5 cm. The ABC's are too big for the workaday letters of a text or for initials, but their built structures are too micro for most real micro-architectures. They do not fulfill any practical role beyond the playful presentation of the alphabet: as twenty three *minuscule* letters (twenty three due to the conventional *i/j* and *u/v*/"double *u/v*" interchangeability), it seems unlikely they would have been set to work as initials in printed texts;[4] as letters, it seems equally unlikely they would have been set to work as models for mirco-architectural structures; (compare figs. 5.5 and 5.6) as engravings of uneven and not particularly high quality, it seems unlikely they would have served as pedagogical tools for other engravers; finally, as an ABC, the letters are so difficult to distinguish that they could hardly have served in early reading education, nor do they appear in a primer-like format. These general descriptions of the alphabet as a whole serve as an introduction to letters and

[4] The Gothic minuscule figured alphabet by fifteenth century contemporary Meister E.S. has been modified for use as initials, and even for wall painting. Jürgen Alexander Wurst, *Das Figurenalphabet des Meisters E.S., Schriften aus dem Institut für Kunstgeschichte der Universität München* 73 (Munich: TUDUV, 1999), pp. 96–105.

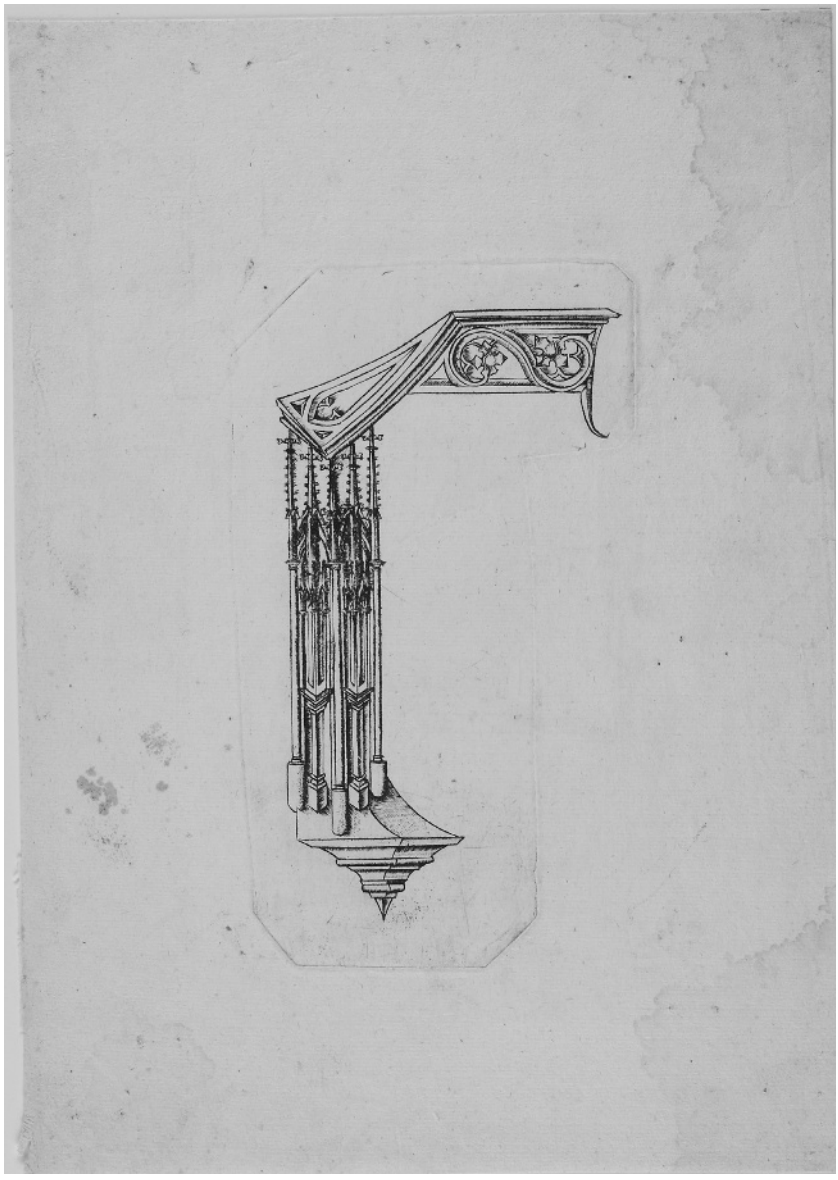

Fig. 5.3 Gothic minuscule letter *c* of the anonymous architectonic alphabet, engraving, second half of the 15th century. Photo: Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen-Nürnberg.

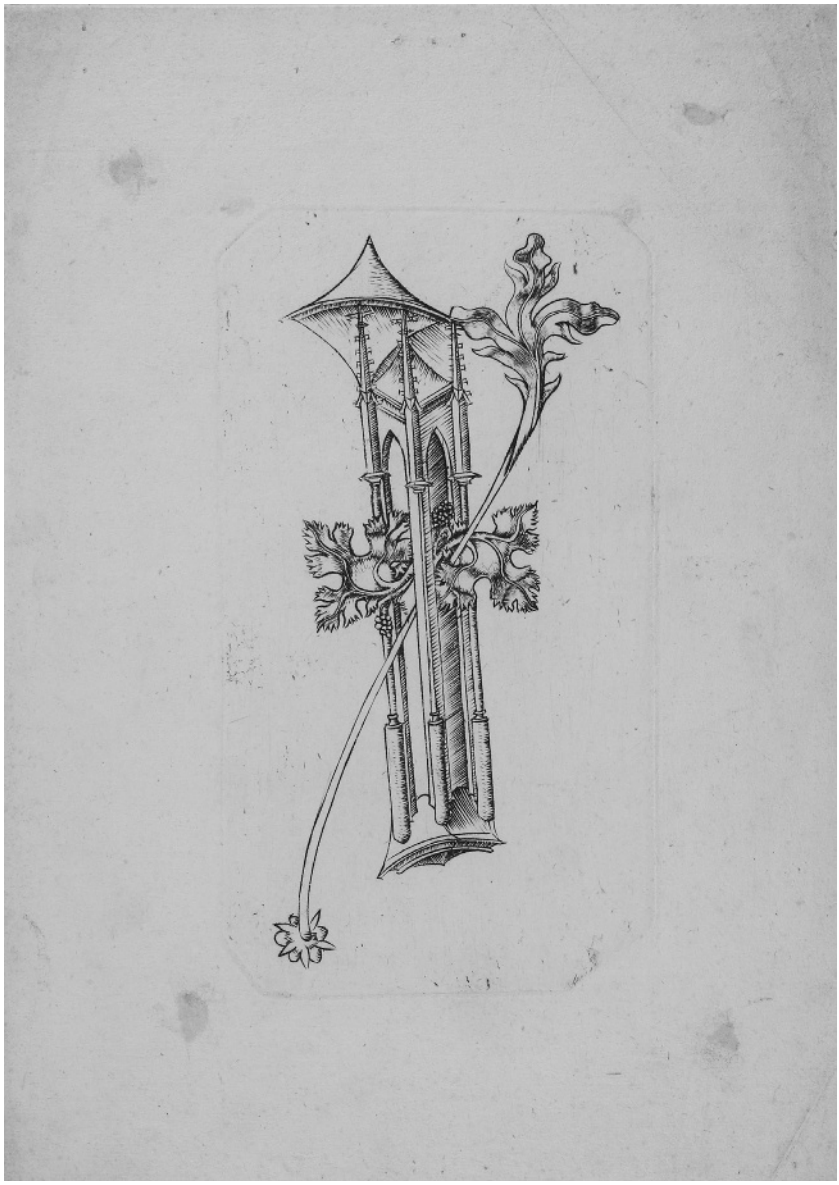

Fig. 5.4 Gothic minuscule letter *x*. Photo: Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen-Nürnberg.

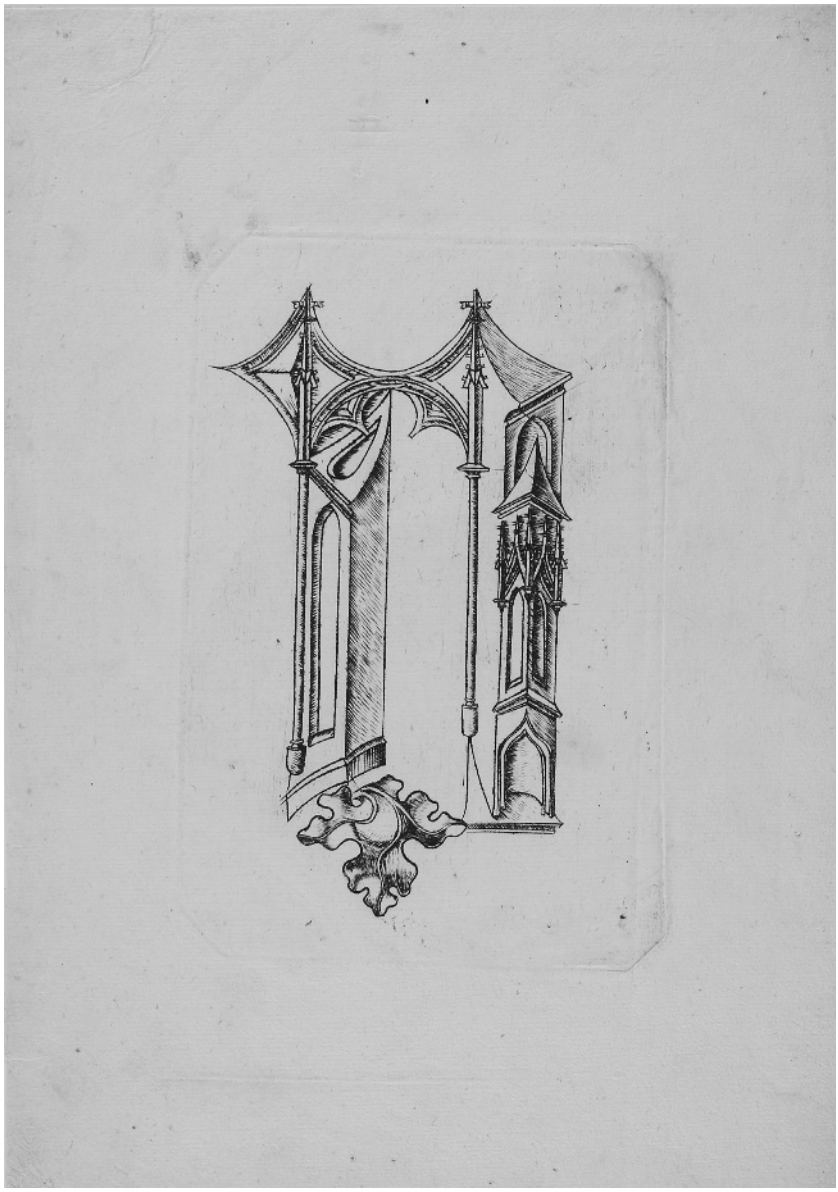

Fig. 5.5 Gothic minuscule letter *u/v*. Photo: Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen-Nürnberg.

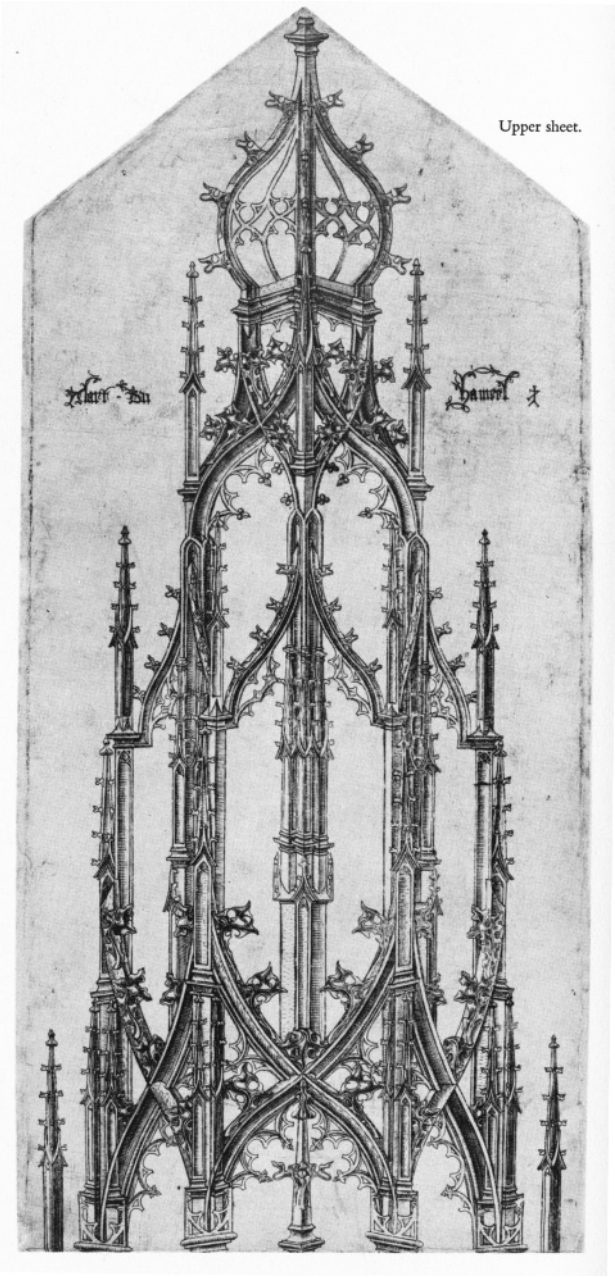

Fig. 5.6 Detail from a monstrance by Alart du Hamel, Netherlandish engraving, late fifteenth/early sixteenth century. Photo: after Max Lehrs, *Late Gothic Engravings of Germany & the Netherlands: 682 Copperplates From the "Kritischer Katalog"* (New York: Dover Publications, 1969), no. 494.

to some of the theoretical concerns—representation, legibility, sequentiality, materiality, hybridity, interiority—elaborated upon below. All of the alphabetic, architectural, and hybrid features sketched here will receive greater treatment in the course of this essay.

As a final introductory point, it is worth stressing how little the scholarly world actually knows about this alphabet. The last substantive treatments of the work hail from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. No definitive evidence has come to light on the engraver's identity, and the few scholars who have written on the alphabet beyond a passing reference are in disagreement. The two major disputants of the late nineteenth century are Jaro Springer, who has produced the longest discussion (1897) of the alphabet in the critical literature, and Max Lehrs, the eminent German specialist in Northern European engraving who first carefully described sixteen letters in an 1888 publication.[5] Springer suggested a late fifteenth-century Netherlandish origin by an engraver probably working under the contemporaneous influence of Master W With the Sign of the Key, a significant percentage of whose works consist of decorative interiors and objects.[6] Lehrs first posited it as a South German work through a

[5] Jaro Springer, *Gothic Alphabets* (London: International Chalcographical Society, 1897). Upon his discovery of thirteen letters located in the University at Erlangen's library, Lehrs published a detailed description in "Der deutsche und niederländische Kupferstich des fünfzehnten Jahrhunderts in den kleinerern Sammlungen (II)," *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 11/3 (1888), pp. 213–239. The letters are shelved at the Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen-Nürnberg under Anonym AK 228–AK 240. Each letter is printed on its own page, each of which measures approximately 31 × 22 cm. For the provenance of the Erlangen collection, see Christian Hofmann-Randall, "Zur Geschichte der Graphischen Sammlung der Markgrafen von Brandenburg-Ansbach," in *100 Meister-Zeichnungen aus der Graphischen Sammlung der Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg*, ed. Rainer Schoch (Nuremberg: Verl. des Germanischen Nationalmuseums, 2008), pp. 11–17. Soon afterwards Lehrs happened upon the full set in Bologna, announced the same year in "Eine vergessene Kupferstichsammlung" in *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* 24/1 (1888), pp. 14–17. Springer elaborates upon Lehrs' descriptions and reprints the entire alphabet in expanded form. The letters appear as numbers 144–166 in Lehrs' monumental resource *Geschichte und kritischer Katalog der deutschen, niederlaendischen und französischen Kupferstichs im XV. Jahrhundert*, vol. 4. (Vienna: Gesellschaft fuer Vervielfaeltigende Kunst, 1921), p. 304 ff. The most recent reproduction of the letters since Springer's can be found in Massin, *La lettre et l'image: la figuration dans l'alphabet latin, du huitième siècle à nos jours* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), p. 59. Also available in English as *Letter and Image*, trans. Caroline Hillier and Vivienne Menkes (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1970). Note that the M has been flipped upside down.

[6] See below for a discussion of this particular engraver's monogrammatic mark and potential identity. The mark itself looks like a Roman capital letter A with a cross

study of watermarks, but in an 1899 response to Springer's publication, conceded the possible localization of the work as Netherlandish, though he strongly resisted the connection to Master W.[7] He pronounced the architectonic letters' engraver "mediocre." The letters' unsophisticated and rough technique combined with an anonymous creator may well be leading reasons for their neglect in the critical literature, though I will demonstrate they are rich on ideas, however poor their execution.

The alphabet appeared in Northern Europe around the time when figured and other artistic alphabets were just starting to emerge. Their descendants would later become a popular secular genre in the sixteenth century, beginning with the publication of Peter Flötner's entirely human *Menschenalphabet* in 1534. The architectonic ABC artist's comtemporary, the Master E.S., engraved a now well-known figured alphabet, and a few other earlier figured alphabets exists.[8] The other "characters" in this nascent genre really are all characters, that is to say the other ABC's present zoologic and anthropomorphic figures within the letters and very little, if any, architectural features. In contrast, the letters in the architectonic alphabet mark a significant departure from pre-existing and contemporaneous artistic alphabets in 1) their purely architectural focus, 2) in that the letters are minuscule

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descending from the center bar, and has traditionally been interpreted as a sign for a key.

[7] The first assertion comes in Lehrs, "Der deutsche und niederländische Kupferstich." The slight concession can be found in Lehrs, "Ueber [sic] gothische Alphabete" *Repertorium* 22/ 5 (1899), p. 375. Just a few years earlier, the German scholar published a catalogue collection of Master W's engravings which contains no further reference to the alphabet. Wolfgang Boerner produced the only major study of Master W in a doctoral dissertation, also with no mention of the alphabet. Max Lehrs, *Der Meister WA, ein Kupferstecher der Zeit Karls des Kühnen*, (Leipzig: K.W. Hiersmann, 1895); Wolfgang Boerner, *Der Meister WA*, (Leipzig: R. Noske, 1927). A 1967 publication with a reprint of the letter *d* concurs with Lehrs, in *Fifteenth century engravings of northern Europe from the National Gallery of Art* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1967), no. 250.

[8] For more on Master E.S.'s alphabet and other late medieval engraved and manuscript figured alphabets, see Wurst, *Das Figurenalphabet des Meisters E.S.* On the phenomenon of figured alphabets and their chronological development, see Dietmar Debes, *Das Figurenalphabet* (München-Pullach: Verlag Dokumentation, 1968); Joseph Kiermeier-Debre and Fritz Franz Vogel, *Menschenalphabete: nackte Models, wilde Typen, modische Charaktere* (Marburg: Jonas, 2001) and their again co-authored *Das Alphabet: die Bildwelt der Buchstaben von A bis Z* (Ravensburg, Germany: Ravensburger Buchverlag, 1995). Less encompassing, see also Hugues Demeude, *The Animated Alphabet.* trans. Ruth Sharman (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1996).

rather than majuscule—though a few other minuscule alphabets do exist, notably Master E.S.'s—, and 3) in that they are among the first letters to break open the solid lines of script with their colonettes, interior rooms, and baldachins.[9] While I will further consider the alphabet loosely in the context of late fifteenth-century Northern European engraving, my goal in discussing the cultural background is to not to solidly pin down a particular artist or a school from which this alphabet may have emerged. Rather, I aim to situate the alphabet within the focus time period of this volume and its associated broader cultural context of changing attitudes about textuality and about architecture induced by the advent of print, in addition to the context of ongoing theoretical inquiry into the building-alphabet connection.

In theorizing the intersections between language and architecture, the most significant contributions have pointed out ways in which the two may serve as metaphors for each other. This is no light observation, for the metaphors in our speech underlie and define our most basic perceptions of our world, as Lakoff and Johnson remind us in *Metaphors We Live By*.[10] Adrian Forty outlined six general categories of language metaphors used for architecture historically, beginning in the mid-seventeenth century.[11] Because he aimed to expose strands of historical discourse, his categories are not tidy. For example, the second category, "to describe what made architecture an art," models itself after Horace's description of poetry, "the power of words used in the right places and in the right relationships."[12] Dominated by the first element, "the right places," the full phrase implies purely spatial and hierarchical, or structural, comparisons, obscuring the potential semantic, historical, aural, or even certain kinds of visual comparisons contained within "the right relationships." Other critical writings

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[9] Ulrike Jenni was the first to note this distinction between Master E.S.'s figured letters of 1466/67 and his predecessors'. Ulrike Jenni. *Das Skizzenbuch der Internationalen Gotik in den Uffizien: der Übergang vom Musterbuch zum Skizzenbuch* (Wien: Holzhausen, 1976), p. 66. The architectonic alphabet much more dramatically opens the line than Master E.S.'s work.

[10] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

[11] 1. Against invention, 2. To describe what made architecture an art, 3. To describe the historical origin of architecture, 4. To discuss architecture as a medium of communication, 5. Analogies with grammar, 6. Semiotic and structuralist applications to architecture. Adrian Forty, *Words and Buildings: A Vocabulary of Modern Architecture* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000), pp. 63–85.

[12] Forty, *Words and Buildings*, pp. 66–67.

point to the *reversal* of the metaphor in that ideas and terms borrowed from architecture shape our basic conception of language. For example, Deborah Cameron and Thomas Markus briefly discuss the complex architectural heritage of structuralism, one of the leading linguistic movements of the twentieth century.[13] They also comment on the architecturally-themed artificial "levels" of linguistic organization, like phonology, morphology, and syntax. The work of Michael Reddy reveals the powerful metaphor of "language as a container" that underlies our everyday communications.[14] These are all important contributions in our understanding of the two concepts at stake, but they are messy and incomplete.

The conflation of *alphabet* with building forces us to articulate a much more precise understanding of language, and of its shared features with architecture, than existing descriptions offer. On the whole, theorists of both language and architecture view language or "discourse" as one monolithic phenomenon; they simply fail to take into account the complex multiplicity of linguistic components and their functions.[15] Letters possess a triple quality, as sounds, images, and words or morphemes. Their other features and functions may draw on these three qualities in any number of ways. For example, letters can be cultural artifacts with a history. They can be autotelic or heterotelic, or both simultaneously. They can be both parts and wholes. A fuller reading of the intersection between language and built structures will distinguish the many different ways in which various features and functions of letters correspond to, as well as resist comparison to, the

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[13] Cameron and Markus, *Words Between the Spaces,* p. 5.

[14] See Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, pp. 10–12. "Linguistic expressions are containers for meaning" (10). Some examples the authors provide are: "You can't simply *stuff* ideas *into* a sentence any old way;" "When you have a good idea, try to *capture* it immediately *in* words." "It's difficult to put my ideas *into* words." "His words *carry* little meaning."

[15] Although language philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein does not discuss the combined practices of architecture and language very explicitly, his *Philosophical Investigations* lies rife with questions concerning language as a spatial practice and begins with a description of builders. Prior to writing the work, Wittgenstein had devoted two years to the design and construction of his sister's residence, the Stonborough-Wittgenstein House in Vienna. Nana Last's reading of his language philosophy takes into account the visual appearance of Wittgenstein's texts themselves, reproducing for comparison pages from his earlier and later work, Nana Last, *Wittgenstein's House* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008). And while only briefly discussed, Adrian Forty's distinction between the linguistic and the semantic levels of language also serves as an exception, *Words and Buildings*, p. 64.

features and functions of architecture. It will not focus exclusively on existing metaphorical comparisons, which inevitably fall short in descriptive power. In pinpointing similarities, however, it will demonstrate why these comparisons have been effective in shaping our idea of language and architecture as similar phenomena.

First, we must distinguish between comparisons made on the linguistic level of language and on the semantic level of language.These two pair up with what Roman Jakobson calls the "syntagmatic" and the "paradigmatic," or the axis of combination and the axis of selection. Are we talking about the grammatical features of language—the syntagmatic—and how we order them, thinking in terms of letters, words, sentences, paragraphs, etc? If so, to what "pieces" of architecture do these features correspond?[16] Metaphors at this level involve combinatorial features, classification, spatialization and hierarchical features, especially part to whole relationships. They generate an awareness of the formal structures of a text. But a more holistic understanding of buildings problematizes one-to-one mappings between "pieces" of languages and "pieces" of buildings, and in the disconnect we may be encouraged to retool an overly structural view of language.[17] Throwing the linguistic metaphor back onto buildings also exposes

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[16] Relating them to the history of civilizations, Victor Hugo makes some specific suggestions: pillar = letter; arcade = syllable; pyramid = word. Hugo, *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame,* p. 163. In another text, Hugo interprets the alphabet as a microcosm of the world, with many architectural readings of individual letters. E.g. "A is a roof, a gable with its crosspiece, the arch, *arx*…"

"E a solid foundation, the right foot, a console and a sternpost [étrave], the entire architecture of the basement in a single letter…"

"F is the gallows, a pitchfork, Furca…"

"H is the facade of a building with its tow towers…"

"N is a closed door with its diagonal bar…"

"For some of those mysterious constructors of language who built the foundations of human memory, and whom memory forgets, it could be that the A, E, F, H, I, K, L, M, N, T, V, Y, and Z were none other than the various ribs of a temple's framework."

Cited in Jerome Rothenberg and Jeffrey C. Robinson, ed. *Poems for the Millennium: the University of California Book of Romantic and Postromantic Poetry,* vol. 3 (Berkeley, Calif; London: University of California Press, 2009), p. 729.

[17] South Slavic oral poets understand language not hierarchically, but as groups of sounds or clusters of meaning. In his study on these balladeers, Albert Lord notes that "Man without writing thinks in terms of sound groups and not in words, and the two do not necessarily coincide. When asked what a word is, he will reply that he does not know, or he will give a sound group which may vary in length from what we call a word to an entire line of poetry, even an entire song." Albert Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, (New York: Athenum, 1965), p. 25.

multiple hierarchies at work: how do the various tiers of a built structure compete with or harmonize with each other and with the various tiers of their constituent parts, those parts themselves possessive of a hierarchy? Visible in these brief examples, this view of language as a grammatical hierarchy with discrete, movable parts—a quintessential feature of combinatorial letters—provides an extremely provocative framework for conceptualizing buildings, and vice versa.

Or, instead of grammar, are we talking about linguistic meaning? Metaphors at this level—the paradigmatic—encompass what Plato called the three uses of language: representation, communication, and classification. They focus on the legibility of architecture, and on the filling of the alphabetic sign with particular signification. Both alphabets and architecture are empty signifiers to be recruited by some system of meaning. Patricia Crain reads the alphabet as a "semantic vacuum," a "space [into which] competing meaning systems may rush."[18] The architectonic alphabet reminds us of letters' placeholder function in making them literal places to hold things, though those things are, appropriately, absent. We often too easily assert that letters primarily represent sounds, an assertion that comes immediately under attack in the learning of English orthography. If we keep in mind the letter's triple qualities of sounds, image, and word—and that no single one of these media or functions fully explains the letter—we must admit its representational function to be much more complex.

Similarly, theorists of architecture and architects themselves point to the problematic ability of buildings to represent anything.[19] It is difficult to identify the extent to which texts shape our understanding of buildings, and thus the extent to which—or even whether—buildings offer an independent legibility. Evocative rather than explicit, instead

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[18] Patricia Crain, *The Story of A*, (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 2000) p. 18.

[19] Cameron and Markus' thesis relies precisely on this ambiguous signification and weak legibility. "Buildings are not linguistic objects, but the meaning we accord to them is heavily dependent on texts about them," *Words Between the Spaces,* p. 12. In their introduction to a collection of essays on the topic, Paul Crossley and Georgia Clarke point out the weaker semantic and semiotic powers of built objects: "architectural significance will never have the semantic precision of the spoken or written word." But they take neither alphabetical letters nor the text as an image itself into account. Crossley and Clarke, introduction to *Architecture and Language: Constructing Identity in European Architecture, c. 1000–c. 1650* eds. Paul Crossley and Georgia Clarke (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 4.

of offering up clear legibility, buildings function as ciphers.[20] Designers cannot control the interpretations of their buildings any more than authors the interpretation of their words. The pages of Cameron and Markus' book, *The Words Between the Spaces: Buildings and Language,* list example upon example of many architectures that defy design intentionality. If the Wittgensteinian concept of "meaning as use" holds true for both language and buildings, the weight of intentionality—if it can even be found—behind language use and architectural design holds less sway in our interpretations of the two. Along with Victor Hugo, Erwin Panofsky presents a notable exception to the claim that buildings do not inherently represent; he argues that high Gothic cathedrals visually present both the methodology and practices of high medieval scholasticism.[21] Ethan Matthew Kavaler implicitly draws quite heavily on Panofsky's thesis in his reading of late Gothic ornament, e.g. "The Ulm tabernacle can be read like an intricate sentence with oppositional clauses and a predicate. Doubleness is unified, opposition are resolved, and a conclusion is ultimately reached. The eye is led along the lines of the tabernacle, noting true and false

[20] In her introduction to *Reading Medieval Images*, Elizabeth Sears comments on the ubiquity as well as the shortcomings of the word "reading" in image theory. "There are things a 'reading' is not. The term is not used synonymously with 'stylistic analysis' or 'formal analysis,' interrelated practices that have traditionally been the goal of much art-historical research," she asserts. "Nor is 'reading' synonymous with 'iconographical analysis.' The latter has come to imply a search for meaning, narrowly defined, though a process of deciphering pictorial conventions." Elizabeth Sears, "Reading Images" in *Reading Medieval Images: The Art Historian and the Object*, eds. Elizabeth Sears and Thelma K. Thomas (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2002), p. 2. While close reading literary scholars will take issue with the exclusion of stylistic and formal analysis from a theory of reading, art-historical practices certainly differ from literary close readings. Thanks to Christina Svendsen for suggesting to me the notion of buildings as ciphers.

[21] Erwin Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (New York: New American Library, 1976 reprint of 1957). Panofsky's view has come under questioning by Erik Inglis in his examination of a fourteenth century scholastic's description of Parisian architecture. He argues that Panofsky's thesis draws on modern descriptions of both scholastic thought and of Gothic structure, a comparison further reinforced in that they both draw on metaphors from each other. *Erik Inglis* "Gothic Architecture and a Scholastic: Jean de Jandun's Tractatus de laudibus Parisius (1323)," *Gesta* 42/1 (2003), pp. 63–85. It may be said that his source's training lay not in seeing the *methodology* of his education at work in the world; it was to recombine out of the stockpile of descriptors offered to him by it. That kind of training was put towards particular uses, and it seems as though descriptions of architecture were not one of them. The real value of Panofsky's article for the present purpose lies in its willingness to seek out the pressure points between language and architecture.

pathways." But Kavaler ultimately cannot tell us the contents of that sentence.[22] His interpretation of a geometic rib configuration with calligraphic overtones must end with the suggestion of "a metalanguage or, rather,…a material register of one. […] It is not possible to give a definite reading of the Krenstetten vaults, only a likely path of inquiry and reflection. The designs here imply notions of difference, development, hierarchy, and the limits of comprehension." We struggle to map the nuances of language onto architecture, with its limited polarities of expression (in-out, public-private, hidden-manifest, etc), and we struggle to map the concrete presences and functional drives of architecture onto language. Architectures and alphabets share many of the same foundational premises because they are both ambiguous signifiers, yet at the same time charged with heavily symbolic missions. This is not to say that ciphers cannot be mimetic or representational; we feel the echo and touch of the real within letters; we experience the sublime and the fantastic within architectural spaces.

Second, and deeply related, comes the notion of movement through both texts and buildings. How do we progress through a text, or through a building? Texts thwart their own left-right linearity in so many ways: non-sequential plot structures, repetition, imagery and actual images, to name just a few examples. Early modern texts are no exception. What about progressing through *spoken* text? It has an even stronger linear drive, and yet similar strategies of repetition and echoing haunt its forward thrust. Architectures has a sequentiality unfolding in time; like a text, we cannot take in its totality at once. We must experience it in parts, and that experience may involve backtracking, discoveries, echoes of other parts within the building or allusions to other architectures and other architectural experiences. We are confronted with competing experiences of horizontal versus vertical space. Vertical progression typically dominates in Gothic architectures, although many carved altarpieces from Antwerp and Brussels are bi-axial, with the narrative sequence displayed horizontally."[23] A fuller theoretical

[22] Ethan Matthew Kavaler, "Renaissance Gothic: Pictures of Geometry and Narratives of Ornament," *Art History* 29 (2006), p. 22 here and p. 26 just below. In one example about a Moses sculpture, he does imply that the figure sits in a kind of dead end section whose outer pinnacles "end abruptly, but are linked by flying buttresses to three inner uprights that read higher" (22). Is the suggestion that worship of the Hebrew Bible prophet results in a dead end, but appreciating him in context leads one to higher revelation?

[23] Kavaler, "Renaissance Gothic," p. 44, n. 98.

critique of linguistics and architectures ought to offer a comparison of sequential and non-sequential experience. Furthermore, it needs to acknowledge alphabetic language as a visual and spatial practice.

Third, we must make some account of the pleasure we receive from occupying built spaces and reading, listening to, and looking at texts. Is it the same kind of pleasure? The neglect of this important potentially shared quality comes as a glaring omission within the critical literature on the two—a lacuna particularly surprising in light of the predominance of architectural historians writing on the topic. The architectural alphabet reminds us that texts, too, are visual objects and that architecture, too, affects the sounds we hear. We derive pleasure (or other feelings) from looking at texts and buildings, and we derive pleasure (or other feelings) from the artfulness of their compositions. This connection may be one reason why the Horatian quotation on poetry, "the power of words used in the right places and in the right relationships," worked so strongly upon the eighteenth-century architectural imagination: of all the genres, poetry foregrounds visual, aural, and lexemic synergy. The architectonic ABC's also remind us that a pleasurable legibility suffers when we push the alphabet too much towards visual aesthetics, when we make an alphabet an art object.

Fourth, we must take account of this very object-ness of letters, manifested particularly strongly in the architectural alphabet. Pushing letterforms into concrete architectural structures visually articulates the feeling of material reality we sense within letters, even if we cannot really put our finger on the consistency of that materiality. The poet John Powell Ward describes how "as servants to meaning, letters leave meaning as a kind of mind-substance we think we posses (even of concrete things), naked of dress or fixable identity, which words themselves capture for us."[24] Letters fare no better "as merely visible signs," for they "become games, puns, calligraphy, print, letter-design, and so on; they seem to peel off the top." Psychoanalytic theorist Jacques Lacan deliberately uses the word "material" to define letters in his essay, "The Agency of the Letter in the Unconscious," though his language resists any clear definition of that materiality.[25] And the

[24] John Powell Ward, *The Spell of the Song*: *Letters, Meaning, and English Poetry*, (Madison, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2004), and below also, p. 16.

[25] His analysis eventually does admit that the material is only one part of the letter's characteristics. "Nous désignons par lettre ce support materiel que le discours concret emprunte au langage. Cette simple définition suppose que le langage ne se

great classical champion of materialist theory, Lucretius, exhibited a very uncertain relationship to the potential materiality of his poem's own language. At times the *De rerum natura* (*On the Nature of Things*) finds proof for material connections between things in the world by pointing to their orthographic relationship, and at other times it insists on the purely metaphorical quality of the letter comparisons.[26] In his analogies, Adrian Forty seems to stumble accidentally upon the alphabet's meaty presence with the offhand comment that "architecture has certain things in common with language, for example…it can mediate things apart from what is contained within its own materiality."[27] Both are caught up in the play between representing and being. What becomes clear among these theorists and in the "metaphors we live by" described above is that, at the very least, the language of the physical inextricably permeates our basic understandings of language in general.

Since language falls short of architecture's tangibility, we ought to contemplate what its vague materiality does accomplish. While one may copyright a font, no one "owns" the alphabet, yet people do own buildings in many complex ways. While both letters and architectures are tools, means to other ends, it is uncommon to find an architecture existing for purely for architecture's sake (though this desire is frequently expressed in fantasy architectural plans and descriptions), but it is possible to find language—divorced from certain economic considerations—functioning in this way. And while architecture may take on many forms, including letters, letters are the more pliable medium.[28]

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confound pas avec les diverses fonctions somatiques et psychiques qui le desservent chez le sujet parlant. Pour la raison première que le langage avec sa structure préexiste à l'entrée qu'y fait chaque sujet à un moment de son développement mental." Jacques Lacan, *Écrits*, (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1966) p. 251.

"By 'letter' I designate that material support that concrete discourse borrows from language. This simple definition assumes that language is not to be confused with the various psychical and somatic functions that serve it in the speaking subject—primarily because language and its structure exist prior to the moment at which each subject at a certain point in his mental development makes his entry into it" Jacques Lacan, *Écrits*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Florence, KY: Routledge, 2001), p. 163.

[26] See in particular 1.823–829 on the shared word, *elementa* (elements) for letters and the basic material building blocks; 1.907–915 on the faulty derivation of *ignis* from *lignis* (often translated as "fire" from "fir" trees), and 2.1012–1022 on the distinction between letters and "real things." Lucretius, *De rerum natura* or *On the Nature of Things,* trans. W.H.D. Rouse (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

[27] Adrian Forty, *Words and Buildings*, p. 64.

[28] Johann David Steingruber's 1773 "Architektonisches Alphabeth" is the classic

The proliferation of historiated and decorative initials in the medieval era, and the more radically populated alphabets of the early modern era and beyond, attest to the chiastic properties of letters. In infinite alphabetic colonization and mise-en-abyme, letters can be formed out of any medium, including themselves, and they can be found *on* any medium, including themselves.[29] If language determines the world and the world determines language, letters stand as the very emblem of that chiastic spatio-linguistic nexus.

Finally, architectural historians have considered most extensively the important cultural valence of both alphabets and architecture. Like architectures, alphabets have a historical presence that may or may not be legible to us, and which we continually overwrite with our own agendas. Adrian Forty's metaphors make two significant comparisons in this area. The first, historical, sees a similarity in the lost origins of letters and of architecture. The second, social, sees buildings as a vernacular language to which all have access. Obviously the list can be expanded. Both of these tools, the alphabet and architecture, have long existed, and their remains continually compel us to consider them in myriad ways.

Linguistic versus semantic characteristics, movement through texts and buildings, the pleasure of built structures and of being in language, materiality, visuality, instrumentality, and historico-cultural valence—such are the points of comparison beyond metaphor that must be accounted for in a fuller discussion of architecture and language. With these many different theoretical points of comparison in mind, let us turn more specifically to what edificatory lessons in buildings and letters the very first architectonic alphabet offers us. The theoretical concerns discussed above do not fade as we move into the twilight of the late medieval northern Europe; rather, in looking closely at artist, medium, audience, and the alphabet itself, we will see the early light of shared contemporary building and textual thematics.

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example of alphabetic ground plans. (fig. 5.13) No such alphabetic buildings actually exist.

[29] Several excellent alphabet reference texts showcase the range of alphabetic flexibility, particularly Werner Oechslin, "Architektur und Alphabet" in *Architektur und Sprache: Gedenkschrift für Richard Zürcher*, ed. Carlpeter Braegger (Munich: Prestel, 1982), pp. 216–254, and Massin, *La lettre et l'image: la figuration dans l'alphabet latin, du huitième siècle à nos jours* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), and Joseph Kiermeier-Debre and Fritz Franz Vogel, *Das Alphabet: die Bildwelt der Buchstaben von A bis Z.*

In the latter half of the fifteenth century, engravers created fantasy etchings of religious and secular architecture, and of sacred objects. These paper altarpieces, reliquaries, monstrances, etc., display a virtuosic intricacy, showcasing the engraver's skill and developing the already elaborate whimsy of their real-world stone, wood, and metal counterparts. The purpose of such works, which are materially impossible to produce, has posed a challenge to art historians. Did they serve as models from which artists derived designs for real objects, or for other engravers? Are they providing elaborate possibilities to spark the private devotional imagination into a more intimate relationship with God? Or do they serve a less complex purpose, the giddy exhibition of imaginative capabilities by artists excited about a relatively new medium's potential? Putting the alphabet in the context of those questions, I add a fourth: why engrave a letter, a symbol with no ostensible real-world counterpart, in the same style as fantasy reliquaries, monstrances, retables, and chapel spaces? A look at the state of knowledge about this unique alphabet and at its late fifteenth century post-Gutenberg milieu suggests some answers. By entering into a discussion of the artistic, social, and technological transformations within the geographic spaces of northern continental Europe, we can better answer the question of what it means to enter into a letter, to enter into alphabetical spaces.

If the engraver of this alphabet indeed worked under the influence of Master W with the Sign of the Key, he worked in a cutting edge artistic milieu of the late Gothic period, in the burgeoning field of copper engraving that was still exploring its own medium and the boundaries of its expression. The very first sentence of Lehrs' monograph about the master elevates the monogrammist to the foremost copper engraver of his time.[30] We see the alphabet's artist creating on the cusp of the Renaissance's powerful intellectual thrust which appeared in the rich artistic milieu of Southern Germany or of the fifteenth century Low Countries, the geographical site of Philip the Good of Burgundy's court (1419–1467) and his generous patronage of the arts. The engraver's oeuvre also dates to the period in which we find the rise of the printing press, an invention prompting a pan-European exploration into alphabetic thought. The material presence of letters in the world

[30] Max Lehrs, *Der Meister WA, ein Kupferstecher der Zeit Karls des Kühnen*, p. 1. Translation mine.

took on a more weighty significance in the form of heavy lead type. With the word as a potential thing, the early modern literati invested ever more intellectual and artistic energy into testing and exploiting the letter's triple signification as word, sound, and image.

As the letter elusively solidified, architecture pulled the other way, away from stony practicality and impenetrability, and toward the realm of fantasy. The alphabet emerged as the wildly flamboyant style in architecture enjoys its peak in the Low Countries. This style jabbed at the boundaries of Gothic expression in its intricate, decorative forms. While the Gothic had always been associated with imaginative fantasy, the Flamboyant style took it to the extreme. According to François Cali, the style "does not respond to any structural necessity,"[31] in contrast to how some of the other structural design features, such as vaulting, contributed to the early Gothic style by defining its very look. Cathedral construction saw impractically fantastic blueprints emerging particularly in the previous century,[32] and the introduction of paper into Europe brings a relatively cheap medium on which new artistic minds may more conveniently experiment.

By the fifteenth century, micro-architectures such as shrines had become major sites of the Netherlandish Gothic fantasy. They depended first upon the cathedral structures and their grand-scale designs of stone, and then moved away from those—sometimes in structurally impossible directions for stone—as they appeared in the intricately carved details of wooden church architecture like choir stalls, misericords, and carved altars, or in smaller wooden and metal objects like monstrances and reliquaries, as in the architectural drafts for cathedrals. Certainly all artistic occasions did inform each other, with micro-architectural features in wood and metals taking their cues from stonework and vice versa. But what becomes interesting is how they push and pull each other in terms of what can be achieved at the limits of the material and, correspondingly, on relatively different *scales*. The often smaller size requirements, the capabilities of materials other than stone, and different structural demands allow microarchitectural

[31] "…il ne répond à aucune nécessité de structure" in François Cali, *L'Ordre flamboyant et son temps, essai sur le style gothique du XIV^e^ au XVI^e^ siècle*, (Paris, Arthaud, 1967) p. 18.

[32] For this phenomenon in spires and their conversation with microarchitecture, see Robert Bork, *Great Spires: Skyscrapers of the New Jerusalem*, (Cologne: Kunsthistorisches Institut der Universität zu Köln, Abt. Architekturgeschichte, 2003), pp. 19–21 and 269.

structures to elongate and thin out, to further sophisticate their predecessor stone structures. Late Netherlandish carved altarpieces and the metalwork displayed on or held above the altar, such as monstrances, reliquaries, or censers, reveal a special aesthetic affinity to each other due to the exclusivity of their shared location.[33] Moving from stone to wood and metalwork allows for differing degrees of detail and delicacy, and finally the process of engraving prints for paper opens a floodgate of possibilities.

As is well-known, many early engravers were actually practicing gold- and silversmiths, as the entire practice emerged out of the metalworking tradition.[34] To name just two relevant examples, Willen van den Cruce, the suspected identity of Master W with the Sign of the Key, worked as a goldsmith in Bruges.[35] The prints of Master E.S., Master W's contemporary and the designer of a now well-known figured alphabet, reveal his training as a goldsmith. A metalworking influence explains in part the array of etched fantastic monstrances, croziers, and other religious objects for which the masters would

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[33] Lynn F. Jacobs, *Early Netherlandish Carved Altarpieces, 1380–1550: Medieval Tastes and Mass Marketing* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Jacobs distinguishes an aesthetic divide between the architectural orgnament in carved altarpieces and monumental church architecture. The architectural alphabet shares much with the architectural ornament of these surviving altarpieces: the dramatically curved finials on Tilman Riemenschneider's *Holy Blood Altarpiece* (p. 83, fig. 47) and Michel Erhart's *Blaubeuren Altarpiece* (p. 48, fig. 32) might be compared. Their German origin lends some credence to Max Lehrs' positing of the alphabet as an Upper German work.

[34] Ilja Veldman contends that "The art of copper engraving was born in the workshops of goldsmiths around 1430." Ilja Veldman, "From Indulgence to Collector's Item: Functions of Printmaking in the Netherlands" in *Images For the Eye and Soul: Function and Meaning in Netherlandish Prints (1450–1650)*, trans. Michael Hoyle (Leiden: Primavera Pers [sic], 2006), p. 17.

[35] Reading the "key" instead as an "A" above a cross, A. Wegener Sleeswyk sees in it a latinization of vanden Cruce, or "a cruce" in "De Graveur WA: Een Speurtocht," *Gens Nostra* 49 (1994), pp. 1–13, cited in Ursula Mayr-Harting, *Early Netherlandish Engraving, c. 1440–1540* (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 1997) p. 18. The marking of one's engravings with a monogrammatic symbol became increasingly common among the Northern printmakers; many prints remain unsigned, however. In the absence of a monogram or mark, the scholarly literature has commonly bestowed, when possible, a reference name after a particular work or set of works attributed to the artist. This results in some wonderfully poetic monikers: Master of the Power of Women (Meister der Weibermacht), Master of the Gardens of Love (Meister der Liebesgärten), Master of the Martyrdom of the Ten Thousand (Meister der Marter der Zehntausand). Does the potential rebus in Master W's large A emerging *from* [vanden, a] a cross at the bottom reveal the anonymous architectonic alphabet's artist to be working in a culture particularly sensitive to the visual and spatial semiotics of alphabetic letters?

have received commissions in their traditional practices.[36] Engraving offered an unusual kind of artistic freedom for these artists, for in its early years it did not rely on patronage the way its cousin the woodcut had become shackled to book printing. The search for new markets and new audiences in the thriving art world of the late fifteenth century especially in the Low Countries liberated intaglio printmakers for experimentation.[37] The market for prints might have eventually included just about everyone, from the high-ranked who would give them as gifts, affix them inside lids of small boxes, or post them on their walls, to the lower classes, who would see them pasted on trees at festivals or also use them as wall and furniture decoration.[38] Thus the playfulness we see in the architectonic alphabet emerges out of a variety of factors: the rich artistic milieu of the late fifteenth-century; the architectural fantasy of the late Gothic period; the imaginative opportunities of working with engraving rather than constructing real-world objects out of metal, wood, or stone; the freedom from commission and the resulting need to create new prints in the hopes of attracting new potential markets in a blossoming arts arena; and the availability, lower cost, and under-explored potential of paper as a medium.

These factors collide in the alphabet with a different, more enduring artistic trend: decorated initials. The long tradition of historiated and illuminated letters, the elaborate decorative initials often found at the incipits of manuscript texts, explicitly reveals letters to be the site of fantasy, of imaginative play. Michael Camille's *Image on the Edge*

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[36] "Early impressions from engraved plates on paper were frequently employed in the workshop as trial proofs or as a source of motifs for apprentices. They were also intended as models for compositions or decoration for the benefit of other craftsmen. Early engraving accordingly spawned a large number of ornament prints, a genre that would always remain associated with the medium, and which would continue to prosper in the Netherlands during the ensuing centuries." Veldman, "From Indulgence to Collector's Item," p. 17. Veldman notes that ornament prints in particular characterize the work of Master W with the Sign of the Key, p. 18.

[37] For more on the early Netherlandish printmaking milieu of experimentation, see David Landau and Peter Parshall, *The Renaissance Print, 1470–1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), esp. pp. 46–59. On the exceptional growth of the Netherlandish art market, particularly in the second half of the fourteenth century, see Isa Fleischmann, *Metallschnitt und Teigdruck: Technik und Entstehung zur Zeit des frühen Buchdrucks* (Mainz: P. von Zabern, 1998), pp. 159–160. In the fifteenth century, Bruges' annual May art fair doubled in duration from a fortnight to an entire month (160).

[38] Mayr-Harting, *Early Netherlandish Engraving,* p. 9; Veldman, "From Indulgence to Collector's Item," pp. 11–13.

pointed out how grotesques and other figures populate many such letters within the margins of Gothic manuscripts. Some initials are created entirely out of figures, others consist of any combination of lettershapes and figures, while the majority are an elaborate deformation of the capital letterform. Our architectonic alphabet arises out of this tradition, coincident with the early experimental years of figured alphabets. Several of the artist's contemporary engravers from the Northern Europe began producing alphabets composed of human figures, such as the copy of a pre-existing Basel alphabet by the Master with the Banderoles, or the well-known Gothic alphabet by Master E.S.[39] No longer 'images on the edge' these figured alphabets capitalize on the letter's imaginative potential as a graphic image.[40] But the architectonic alphabet most literally views letters as an imaginative *space*.

Their contours blown up, their own plots on pages devoted to the letter *qua* letter, the architectonic ABC's have aired out their letters in the expectation that something will happen in this richly open alphabetic space. The letters draw attention to their spaces not only through the inclusion of windows and visible rooms, but also through the suggestion of unseen rooms and empty corbel shelves for statuary or parts of walls possibly reserved for images. In keeping with the contemporaneous figured alphabet by Master E.S., the airy architectural alphabet also marks a break from the dense figured alphabets of the past that plug all letter cavities with vegetation or design elements.[41] Such newfound interiority suggests that spiritual depth derives not only from reading the surface words of a text, but somehow from inside a text's very letters. With some places hidden and others revealed, these letters construct a kind of sacred architecture into which the reader must imaginatively enter.

The late fifteenth century actively promoted this kind of reading. The period placed increasing emphasis placed upon private devotion and meditation upon books and their images. Commentators on the phenomenon generally point to fourteenth century St. Catherine of

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[39] The architectural alphabet's engraver most likely had no access to the letterforms constructed on geometric principles by his contemporaries in Renaissance Italy.

[40] Veldman describes an actual example of images moving from the margins to center page in the work of the Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet (also known as the Hausbuch, or Housebook, Master). Some of his scratching dogs, tournaments, hunting parties, and other illustrations can be traced to the source of an Utrecht Book of Hours' marginalia. Veldman, "From Indulgence to Collector's Item," p. 27.

[41] Jenni, p. 66.

Sienna's architecturally-laced charge to "Make yourself a *cell* in your own mind from which you need never come out,"[42] a sentiment echoing the opening lines of St Anselm's much earlier *Proslogion*, "Enter the *inner chamber* of your soul, shut out everything except God and that which can help you in seeking him, and when you have *shut the door*, seek him."[43] Sixten Ringbom traces a history of meditational image theology in the late medieval period to establish ways in which imagery might stir the imagination to stronger prayer and understanding. Ideally one aspires towards the purity of spiritual vision, but lacking that one might use physical and "intellectual" (those existing in the mind but not yet "spiritual") images as tools towards that end.[44] While the "sacramental gaze," the perception of the spiritual with the bodily eye, is grounded in the physical, it still requires a viewing process beyond that of simple quotidian seeing.[45] What better doorkeeper to the soul's chamber than an image of a church into which one might imaginatively enter?

While we cannot know for certain what purposes the architectonic alphabet served, it seems possible that these letters represent

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[42] As cited by her confessor and biographer, Raymond of Capua, in *The Life of St. Catherine of Siena*. trans. George Lamb (New York: P.J. Kennedy & Sons, 1960) p. 43. Her confessor's account also details ways in which prayer transforms Catherine's experiences of space throughout her life: her feet do not touch the stairs ascending or descending; as a young girl she levitates in a cave on the outskirts of town while praying, and she is transported back to the town gate afterward, and her struggles with her family show a constant defiance of parentally controlled, confining spaces. Many thanks to Sarah Blick for suggesting the direction of inquiry in this and the following two paragraphs, and for the bibliography she provided.

[43] Cited in Eamon Duffy. *Marking the Hours: English people and their prayers 1240–1570* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 56.

[44] In linking the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century exhortations to achieve spiritual vision through these other means, Ringbom comments that "…there was but a short step to advising the devout to pray to and to meditate on ordinary, painted or carved images. And in fifteenth century Prayer Books and books of Hours we thus come across rubrics to this effect, exhorting the reader to pray to an image of Christ or the Virgin, and without any restrictions whatever to the character of the image in question." Later he affirms that "…it would…seem as if personal religion during this period [late 14th & 15th c] developed in a new and significant way." Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative. The Rise of the Dramatic Close-Up Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting* (Åbo: Åbo Akademi, 1965) p. 22, 30.

[45] For a summary on various theories of late medieval mystical seeing, see pages xxv–xviii of the Introduction in Robert W. Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). See also in Anton L. Mayer, "Die heilbringende Schau in Sitte und Kult" in *Heilige Überlieferung: Ausschnitte aus der Geschichte des Mönchtums und des heiligen Kultes* (Münster: Aschendorf, 1938), pp. 235–250.

an advanced middle step in the hierarchy of corporeal-intellectual-spiritual seeing. Their humor does not exclude piety. Andrew Taylor notes that late fifteenth-century texts "encourage readers to visualize the events in vivid and intimate terms, even to the extent of inserting themselves in the picture. Visualizing oneself standing at the foot of the cross while Christ was crucified or by the side of the Virgin and her child" as a form of late medieval meditation.[46] Books of Hours, whose peak popularity appeared around the time of this alphabet towards the latter half of the fifteenth century, frequently show their patrons getting up close and personal with the books' images. Sometimes patrons are depicted as using the very book *within* its images, sometimes even as an onlooker to the portrayed religious event itself. In her Book of Hours, Mary of Burgundy is shown in what may be her private chamber reading the book as a window beside her opens onto a display of the Virgin and her entourage in a church-like architecture.[47] A domestic scene of prayer in the home giving way to a glorious church-like interior—this movement seems quite similar to what might occur in meditation upon the architectonic letters. Netherlandish painting in particular tended to show scenes like the Annunciation in a domestic setting,[48] seamlessly meshing sacred and private architectures. With ever more of the populace able to afford prints, the depicted sacred architecture within the images increasingly became a fixture within real homes. One might modestly acquire an appropriate print and view it with the proper sacramental gaze to potentially achieve the desired result.

These examples offer models of corporeal seeing; the alphabet takes the imagining a step further by lending *only* theatrical letter spaces for the mind to populate. Did the letters serve as a setting for religious scenes to play out? Did they serve as memory places to recall favorite paintings or sculptures with which one had an intimate experience?

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[46] Andrew Taylor, "Into his Secret Chamber: Reading and Privacy in Late Medieval England" in *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*. eds. James Raven, Helen Small, Naomi Tadmor. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 44.

[47] See Duffy, *Marking the Hours*, p. 30. For more on this phenomenon, see also pp. 33–38. The church interior depicted may be the church of Notre-Dame in Bruges where she was buried. Many thanks to Laura Gelfand for her helpful comment on this point.

[48] Noted by Diana M. Webb, "Women and Home: The Domestic Setting of Late Medieval Spirituality" in *Women in the Church: Papers Read at the 1989 Summer Meeting and the 1990 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, eds. W.J. Sheild and Diana Wood (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1990), p. 167.

Architecture combined with letters links two key constituents of the medieval memory arts. Mary Carruthers notes classical and medieval citations of alphabetic letters as memorial cues, and describes how tracts on memory building consistently recommend imagining a mental architecture—often a cloister or a church—in which one places images of things that will remind one of the desired texts. To remember the texts, one must call to mind the space and walk through it, retrieving the images.[49] Did their viewers imagine themselves climbing within the letters, collecting their memory objects from the empty corbel shelves, or praying quietly within these "cells"? In Master E.S.'s grotesque alphabet and its precursors humans already inhabited the spaces of letters, although those letters participate in a more secular world.[50] The architectural space of the ABC is not a human architecture: no stairs lead up to the turret rooms or platforms beneath the baldachins, no traces of human comfort can be found. And yet the magic happens when readers can imagine themselves in such inaccessible interiors. For to inhabit the text is to transcend all earthly boundaries, is to move beyond restrictive human constructs, be they of the body, of the imagination, or of language. Sneaking into the letters means, in some sense, inhabiting divine space. Marshall McLuhan describes a specifically "medieval" notion of textuality that believes in a transcendent divine reality behind the text. He points to

> the technique of the "gloss" to release the light from within the text, the technique of the illumination as light *through* not *on*, and the very mode of Gothic architecture itself.
>
> Probably any medieval person would be puzzled at our idea of looking through something. He would assume that the reality looked through at us, and that by contemplation we bathed in the divine light, rather than looked at it.[51]

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[49] Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge University Press, 1990), esp. pp. 28–38, 107–121, and Thomas Bradwardine's tract, discussed on pp. 130–137. Three memory arts tracts, including Bradwardine's, appear appended in the book. Carruthers' latest examples hail mostly from the century prior to the architectonic alphabet's times; whether these specific practices continued into the late fifteenth century is unclear.

[50] A thesis put forth by Jürgen Alexander Wurst, *Das Figurenalphabet des Meisters E.S., Schriften aus dem Institut für Kunstgeschichte der Universität München* 73 (Munich: TUDUV, 1999).

[51] Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962, repr. 2002), pp. 105–106.

Peering out the letter's window reverses the reader's inside-outside positionality, and the creator of this alphabet relies on that mise-en-abyme chiastic quality of the ABC's to inhabit all things and to have all things inhabit them. In this vision, the reader momentarily stops being a reader and instead becomes a text, peering onto the earthly with a new view of himself or herself and the world.

The ABC's empty spaces are signs of things absent, signs of things waiting to be completed through divine inspiration.[52] Eamon Duffy describes blanks within the Books of Hours' written prayers which, like the alphabet's empty corbel shelves, required the reader to fill in a name during the recitation of the prayer.[53] The spaces remind viewers of the ever-present potentiality of spiritual vision, even as they force us to admit that we only ever have access to partial revelation. If we push towards the specifically alphabetic side of partial or incomplete vision, we note that letters in words share a quality of this fragmentation. Unless they have been meaningfully recruited into some other symbolic system, they are never whole in themselves; when they appear alone outside of the context of the alphabet or words, they too offer up only absence and potentiality. The divine speaker of the New Testament does not fashion himself solely as the Alpha. This is the placeholder function, too; letters stand poised and waiting for someone to unlock, or create, their fuller truths. Thus a letter in its individual presence reminds us of meanings to be discovered as well as the meanings we will never access.

We may never know specific practices, but if the architectonic letters indeed served some of these purposes, their creator invokes in them the performative powers of the alphabet to conjure up stories in the mind. To meditate upon the letters is to recreate their sacred architecture for the soul; each letter thus offers a truly edifying edifice. The letters encourage their viewers to engage in the slowest and closest of slow and close readings. We know that, in general, medieval reading was a slow reading to begin with, and late medieval readers

[52] Franz Dornseiff details the many forms of alphabet mysticism in early Christian and classical practices, some of which persisted into the medieval and Renaissance periods, Franz Dornseiff, *Das Alphabet in Mystik und Magie* (Leipzig, Berlin: B.G. Teubner, 1925). The "close reading" of Hebrew letters, particularly in the name of the divine, of the Biblical alpha and omega, or of the *chi-ro* and IHS monograms are well known examples of religious letter mysticism even today. These letters often function as talismanic images imbued with divine power.

[53] Duffy, *Marking the Hours*, p. 32.

of, say, Books of Hours, read and reread their texts on a daily basis. In an alphabetic reading, the reader mentally enters the letters of the text itself and inhabits its spaces to experience divine revelation beyond what may be revealed in a world of fallen words and earthly anthropomorphic images.

With this contextualization we have answered some of the questions posed about the purpose of the Northern European fantasy engraving trend to which this alphabet belongs. Yes, these works likely did aim to spark private devotional imagination in a variety of ways. Yes, the new medium offered artists an imaginative freedom as they sought to create and establish new markets for their works. But two questions remain: did engravings serve as models from which artists derived designs for real objects, or for other engravers? And why engrave a letter, a symbol with no ostensible 'real-world' counterpart, in the same style as fantasy reliquaries, monstrances, retables, and chapel spaces? In an attempt to answer them, these last pages take a very close look at specific features of the architectural alphabet. Doing so, we further see how the alphabet manifests some of the theoretical connections between written texts and architecture outlined above, refining and expanding upon that theory.

In promoting spiritual fantasy in their viewers, the letters themselves recruit from the realm of fantasy: they pair the building blocks of literacy with a fantasy architecture. A close look at the letters shows playful, curved finials, (figs. 5.7), a final poking through the roof, half an ogee arch, or rooms with no means of access. (fig. 5.1) Humorous architecture frequently appears in the works of the engraver's contemporaries mentioned earlier, such as Master W or Master E.S. Two scholars who worked extensively on Master W, Max Lehrs and Wolfgang Boerner, stressed that impossible architectures mark this goldsmith's interiors across his artistic production.[54] The letters exist within non-time and non-space, floating on a blank background with no connection between them and a text or any real-world landscape or text.

[54] For example, see Max Lehrs, *Geschichte und kritischer Katalog des deutschen, niederländischen und französischen Kupferstichs im xv. Jahrhundert* 7 (New York: Collectors Edition, 1970), pp. 4, 12–14; also Wolfgang Boerner, *Der Meister WA*, p. 8, and the "Raumphantasie" and "Raumartistik" [the fantasy and artistry of space] discussion on pp. 29–30; as well as Lehrs, *Der Meister WA*, p. 3, though he does admit that the Master may have had some real construction in metal or wood in the back of his mind.

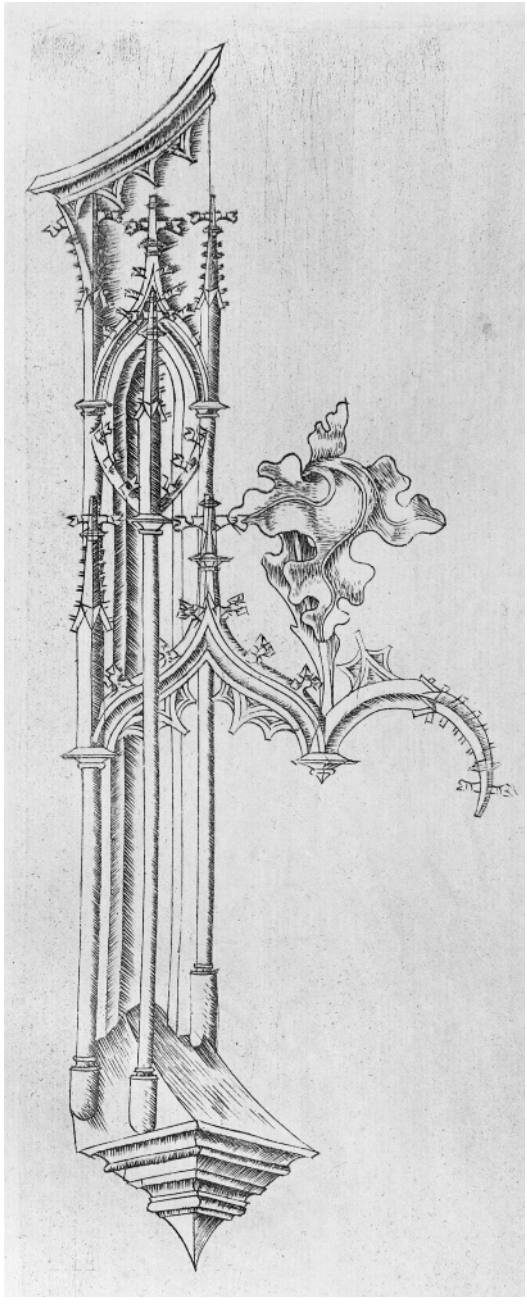

Fig. 5.7 Gothic minuscule letter *k*. Photo: after Jaro Springer, *Gothic Alphabets* (London: International Chalcographical Society, 1897).

Could these fantasy letters really have served as models for other engravers? Despite a lack of evidence, most art historians of the period insist on the purposefulness of intaglio architectural interiors, generally interpreting the quirky, northern continental architectural engravings from this period as such. But what does "model" mean? Models for engraving methods, models for things depicted in engravings, or models for real-life objects? All of such uses may have been the purposes of some engravings, but there are just too many fantasy engravings for them to serve solely as models for other engravers, and too few real-life objects which could be patterned after their impossible architecture.[55] Both Max Lehrs and Wofgang Boerner emphasize the interiors of Master W as imaginative and decidedly not practical in nature.

The architectural alphabet denies any possibility of "model" engraving. We have no evidence that this alphabet was copied or reproduced beyond itself for any other purpose; in fact, Jaro Springer specifically notes its impotence.[56] The letters do not exist as initials in any books, and attempts were clearly made to keep the alphabet intact, as evidenced by the presence of a complete set preserved at Bologna and the thirteen letters together in Erlangen. The letters are sometimes too crude to have served as patterns for other engravers, though as a catalogue of architectural parts they might have provided apprentices

[55] Veldman stresses the ubiquity of "ornament prints" in Netherlandish engraving from its earliest years which could be used as models for other artists or simply for enjoyment. She also points to Master W's series of fantasy ships, the earliest such extant etchings, which were likely occasional pieces created for the marriage of Charles the Bold in 1468. Veldman, "From Indulgence to Collector's Item," p. 18. Master W with the Sign of the Key makes for a good test case, as ornamental engraving characterizes a large portion of his extant work. Henk van Os makes the suspiciously confident assertion that "most of the master's eighty-one prints were intended as models for other artists. He supplied designs for coats of arts and decorative objects like monstrances, a cruciform staff, and incense burner and a beaker," continuing with the unlikely description that "they are architectural evocations which a cabinetmaker, sculptor, painter or goldsmith could use when he needed a space to be peopled with figures. He could replace the very slender columns in the print with pendants to prevent the figure getting lost in a forest of pillars. There are surviving retable cases and epitaphs that are set within late-Gothic ornaments of the kind seen here [in the catalogue]." Henk van Os and others. *Netherlandish Art in the Rijksmuseum*, vol. 1, 1400–1600 (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 2000), pp. 66–67. Another scholar of Master W's work echoed the view that his engraved interiors "may have been designs for tabernacles and shrines rather than real architectural features" in Mayr-Harting, *Early Netherlandish Engraving,* p. 19.

[56] Springer, *Gothic Alphabets*, p. 7.

with some instruction or practice in etching various microarchitectural features. The thought that real-life objects might have been patterned after them is absurd, for what is a real-life alphabet? We do not know to what artistic purposes the letters may have been put, but they come to us now as the mind traces of an engraver expressing the commonalities of his various crafts as he doubled as a woodworker, sculptor, painter, or goldsmith.

The marriage of letters with fantasy architecture highlights some of the shared mimetic fantasies of written language and of architectural engraving. Both of these media pretend to reflect 'real-world' utterances of voice and stone (or wood or metal), while at the same pulling away from them as autonomous forms of expression. The engraved alphabet is caught up within two mimetic systems. First, it reproduces the micro-architecture of stone, wood, and metalwork, itself potentially a mimetic representation of monumental stone building like the cathedral. Next, note how the roofs and corbels angle severely to mimic quill stokes, a feature found in nearly all of the letters. Even the vegetal forms mimic the brush stroke. These are distinct markers of the second type of mimesis, the reproduction of the calligraphic letter, itself a pseudo-mimetic representation of phonetic material. (Of course, these various media inform each other reciprocally within a nexus of mimesis as well; to list these as chains is to underscore a pattern of development.) The conflation of linguistic with architectural mimesis draws attention to the engraver's burin as a drawing instrument that also writes, to the letter as a sound that is also a picture, and to architecture as space with a particular vocabulary.

To focus on that last idea, the idea of architecture as a speaking image, a close look at the letters shows how they lay out the basic "vocabulary" of the Gothic decorative style. Just as letters are considered the building blocks of words in the linguistic metaphor, these letters show the phrases in which Gothic architecture speaks: tracery, myriad pinnacles with crockets, cusping and recusping with trefoils, lozenges, soufflés, colonettes, mullions, lancet windows, vaults, ogee arches, baldachins, windowed niches, stiff-leaf designs, seaweed foliage, etc. It is an alphabet of Gothic architecture as Victor Hugo might have imagined one, of parts and pieces tacked imaginatively—even incongruously, as in *c* for example (fig. 5.3)—onto each other to create an alphabet of letters. The great Gothic cathedrals themselves were often conceived of and built in pieces over the course of several centuries.

The letters offer the lessons of experiencing church spaces in parts. They compel one to consider all of a church's—as well as a letter's—nooks and crannies as potential contemplative spaces, sacred spaces in which revelation can occur. Windowed niches appear in nearly all of the letters. These and the other architectonic strata of letters in this alphabet speak evocatively, hiding and revealing to give each letter a three-dimensional illusion of depth. Breaking down the metaphor to ask what exactly are these pieces "saying" besides "I am Gothic architecture," we are reminded again of the ambiguous writing architecture performs on the world as a cipher. On the flip side, we are reminded that the legibility of letters may lie partly in their iconicity, their ability to look like other things.

But mixing architecture with the ABC's also obfuscates the linguistic metaphor. If the notion of letters as the building blocks of words lends inspiration to the architectural features of the alphabet, the architectural features work to both shore up as well as deconstruct certain solid notions of letters we may harbor. We may think of letters as the scaffolding of words, a materialization of the metaphysical workings of the mind. In linking the alphabet with the some of the strongest, most substantial structures of the late medieval world—stone, wood, and metal—the artist articulates the material realities of language. At the same time, the extreme delicacy and intricacy of this fantasy architecture presents the impossibility of realizing those structures with actual materials. Note, for example, the filigree thinness of the colonettes, the breakable appendage of *k*, (fig. 5.7) or the *e*'s massive stiff-leaf lozenge hovering to the right of its minim, the short vertical stroke running from top to bottom and the fundamental stroke of the Gothic letter (based on the lowercase letter *i* and emblemized in the word *minim* itself. (fig. 5.8) This cohabitation of alphabet and architecture visualizes the paradox of immaterial materiality, capturing the powerful realities of the symbolic world as well as its shortcomings.

Furthermore, this cohabitation of building and letter destabilizes the notion of letters as the smallest indivisible unit within words. The individual architectural pieces of each letter fracture its alphabetic integrity into one ductus or several ducti, the strokes used to create calligraphic letters. The sharply angled roofs and bases of most letters clearly mimic the quill pen's strokes and, along with the separate parts of each body, compel us to consider the Gothic *ductus*, the single stroke the pen makes within a letter without being lifted, rather than

the letter, as the most basic unit of the Gothic script word, rather than the letter. Ductus means "guide" in Latin; this delineation of the ductus posits a reversal such that the guide—the hand guiding the quill along—becomes the guided, becomes the text itself. The reversal of terms links to the idea of letter as emblematic of the chiasmic relationship between language and the world.

Appropriately, the kind of calligraphic writing presented here mimics the formal Gothic hand known in the fifteenth century as *fractura*.[57] (fig. 5.9) The architectonic alphabet furthers fractures the typically dark and heavy Gothic ductus into an airy, textured space, a rich signifier in its own right. Alphabets posing as things other than letters gesture toward meaning systems within the lines. Ulrike Jenni calls sketches of figures in the Uffizi *Buchstabenfragmente*, or letter fragments.[58] The Master of the Banderoles' letter *P* in Washington D.C.'s National Gallery reveals the peculiar mobility of these fractured letters and body parts: someone at some time has tacked onto the *P* a giant's head from another letter to create a capital *R*. An alphabetic world is a world of fragments in which everything, from the most material object to the most abstract idea, can be designated by a letter or a collection of letters, which themselves ultimately consist of a collection of restless lines. From these we must construct meanings, building up from pieces of letters into words and the collection of words that make up ideas. That is, if we are to view letters as the skeletal structures of words.

What kind of reading follows from these fractured letter-edifices? Even figuring out the individual letterform frustrates the reading process. With only thirteen letters in its possession, an 1838 auction confused the *f* for an *e* (figs. 5.10, 5.8); the latest reprinting of the full alphabet by Massin in 1970 turns the M upside down. The 1838 auction house expressed doubt as to the abecedarial identity of the leafy *i*,

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[57] In the fifteenth century, "fractura" referred to any script that looked "broken." The specific hand or font recognized today as "Fraktur" derives from the sixteenth century. Carl Wehmer, "Die Namen der gotischen Buchschriften," *Zentralblatt fuer Bibliothekswesen* 49 (1932), p. 176; his example of an early mention of "fractura" hails from a Netherlandish text dated to time period of the alphabet, the second half of the fifteenth century, pp. 174–175.

[58] According to Jenni, the earliest examples of these come from Berlin in the second quarter of the fourteenth century (quill drawn), and Netherlandish woodcuts from 1464, in *Das Skizzenbuch der Internationalen Gotik*, p. 70. It is interesting to note that the German word for letter, *Buchstabe*, has in *-stab* architectural undertones: *der Stab* denotes a rod, pole, or staff.

(fig. 5.2) tentatively categorizing it as a member of another alphabet altogether, some unknown flower-and-weed ABC.[59] And these were German readers for whom Gothic *fractura* would have been a familiar daily sight. Only with Max Lehr's 1888 discovery of the entire alphabet in Bologna did the letters become fully individually legible and recognized as belonging together in a single alphabet. The process by which letterforms emerge as particular letters, and alphabets as alphabets, within a system of difference underscores one of the most fundamental ideas of Ferdinand de Saussure's structuralist theory. For Saussure, alphabetic letters become paradigmatic of the arbitrary signifiers that take on meaning only by not looking like something else. "The value of letters is purely negative and differential. The same person can write *t*, for instance, in different ways: [shows three different letterforms for t]. The only requirement is that the sign for t not be confused in his script with the signs used for l, d, etc."[60] Differences between letters mark many of his further examples. The architectural alphabet pushes at the notion of boundaries, of bounded language, bounded images, and bounded meanings. The number of letters may be finite, but their forms and their combinations into words are not. The difficult legibility of these letters slows down the reading process, forcing viewers to consider symbolic and graphemic alphabetical forms, as well as architectural ones more closely.

If we read religious texts to edify ourselves, the engraver produces in this alphabet a colossal pun on the edificatory potential of reading. His work anticipates the mounting cultural currency of the pun in the era of Protestant reform, during which new forms of private reading emerged. Reading is presented here as the act of moving from within and around one piece of the building to another; words guide not only towards a textual meaning, but also around a pseudo-religious architecture (a church?) that will never be complete. Playing into the metaphor of reading as edificatory, the act causes one to enter sacred spaces, and the text becomes an image of a church with which one must interact to glean layers of meaning. Frustrating any kind of sequentiality, these letters force one into a kind of continual stopping and starting, pushing one into corners or teasing the eye with

[59] Lehrs, "Der deutsche und niederländische Kupferstich," pp. 237– 238.
[60] Ferdinand de Saussure, "Course In General Linguistics" in *The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism*, ed. Vincent B. Leitch, *et al.* (New York: Norton, 2001), p. 972.

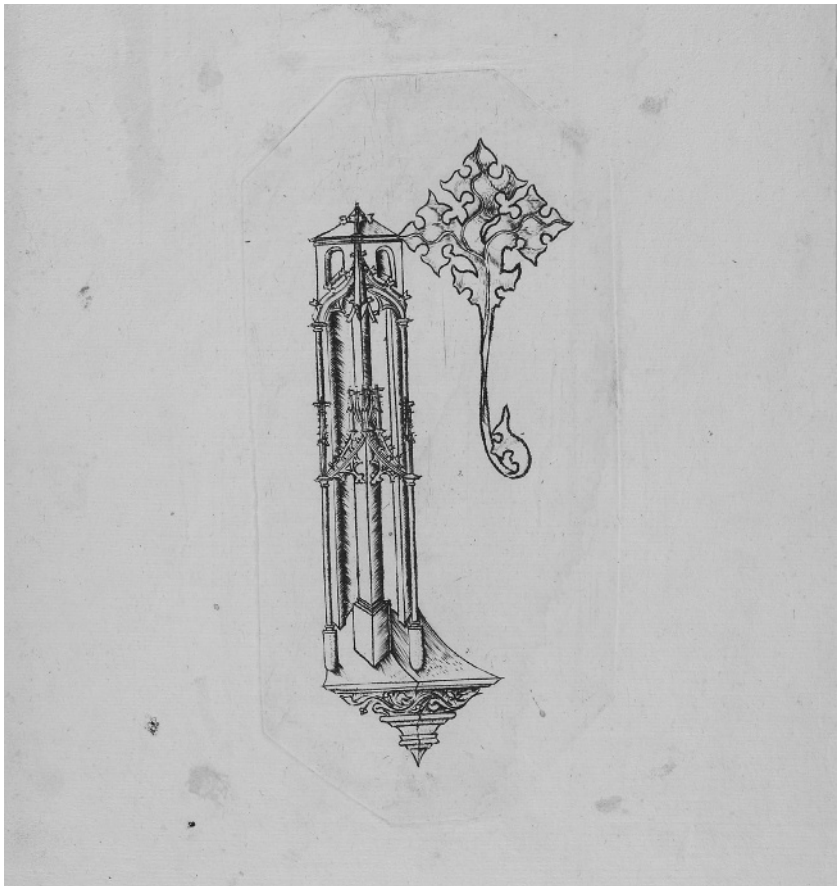

Fig. 5.8 Gothic minuscule letter *e*. Photo: after Jaro Springer, *Gothic Alphabets* (London: International Chalcographical Society, 1897).

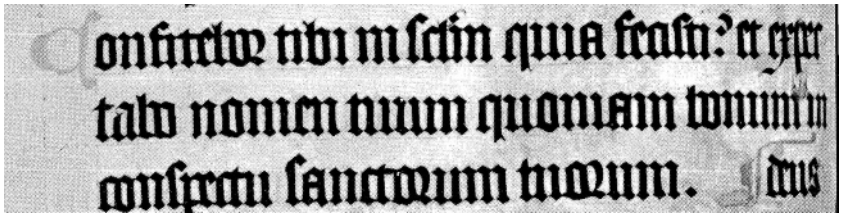

Fig. 5.9 An extreme example of a fractura script, *c*. 1500, Cistercian Psalter known as the Kinloss or Boswell Psalter, Scottish. Photo: after Joyce Irene Whalley, *The Pen's Excellencie: Calligraphy of Western Europe and America* (Tunbridge Wells, Kent: Midas Books, 1980), p. 76.

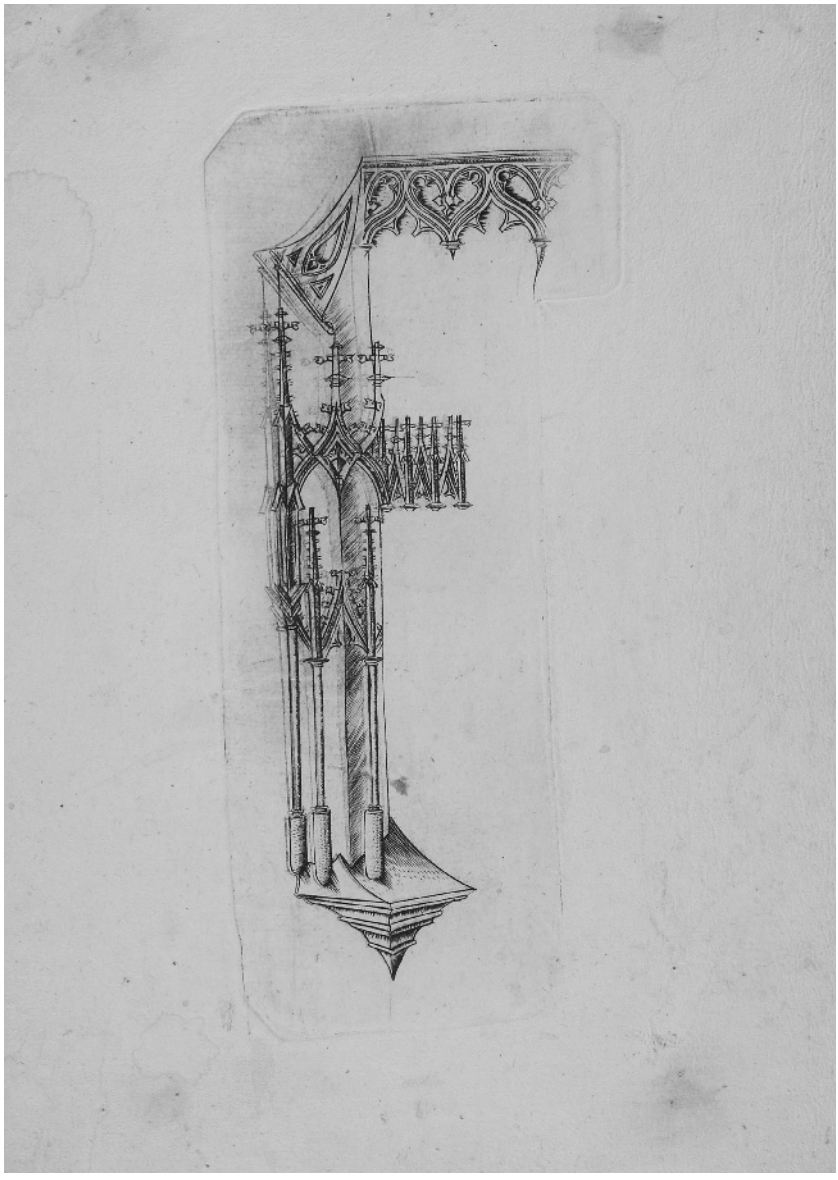

Fig. 5.10 Gothic minuscule letter *f*. Photo: Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen-Nürnberg.

partial architectural features like half arches. The process of looking at them recalls the act of moving through the spaces of words while reading, going back over and through the material in contemplation. In this context we might consider the ways in which the structures of a Gothic cathedral provide edification.

Even if the whole edifice abstractly might attempt to express theological lessons, as Panofsky claimed, specific aspects of the church exterior and interior architecture are indisputably edificatory. One can imagine the variety of lessons figures on the portals, paintings, statuary, and the intricately carved altarpiece retables offered to the literate and non-reading public alike. This more informal education coincides with the *physical* church itself as a locus for the more formal schooling that taught alphabetic literacy. Throughout the medieval period across Europe, alphabetic literacy was frequently in the hands of the Church, with students often receiving their education at cathedral schools. This practice still continues today in the form of Sunday catechism taught to children in the basement of many church buildings while parents attend services. In the sixteenth century, pedagogue and alphabet theorist John Hart recommended writing the alphabet on supporting structures of buildings, "if the figures with their letters were drawen on the walles, pillers, and postes, of churches, tounes and houses, they moughte muche helpe and further the ignorant of al letters, to atteine to reade."[61] The architectonic alphabet articulates a continuity between the experience of church architecture and the experience of reading towards salvation.

Perhaps the most explicit expression in large-scale architecture of the connection between the physical Gothic pedagogical space and the alphabet occurs in English architect William Orchard's celebrated pendant vault of the Oxford Divinity School. (fig. 11) Anyone who has ever spent time in this room cannot help but notice the energetic presences of multitudinous hanging letterforms sprouting across the impressive vaulting. Located just off the present-day entrance hall to the Bodleian Library and roughly contemporaneous with the architectonic alphabet engraver's artistic activity, the vault bosses feature interlaced Gothic Fraktur initials of Oxford's late medieval dignitaries in high relief. With Duke Humphrey's Library, part of the Bodleian Library, located directly above this hall, one of the world's greatest

[61] John Hart, *A Methode or comfortable beginning* (London, 1570), sig. ii.r.

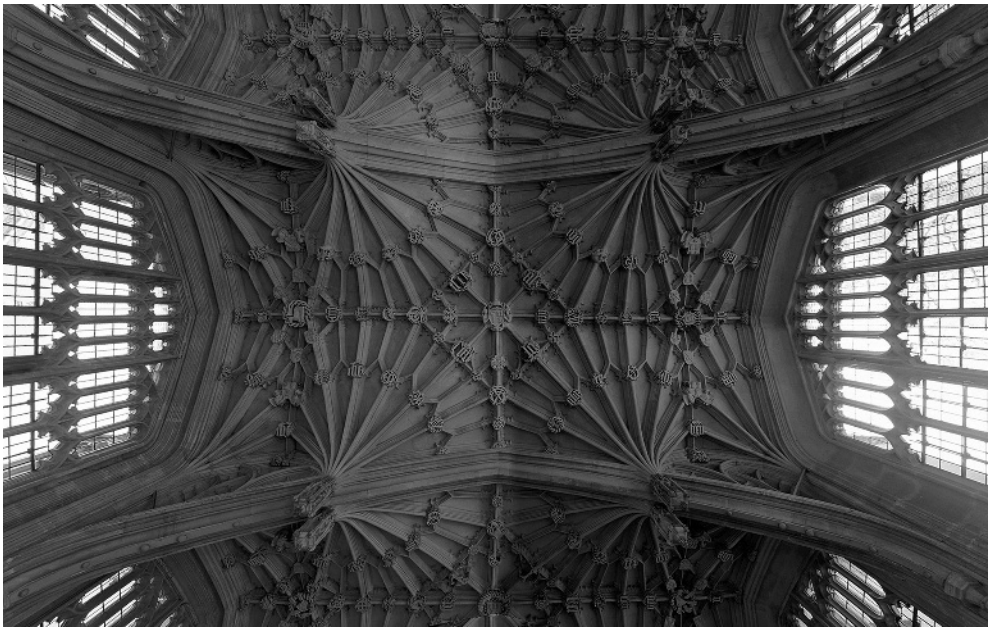

Fig. 5.11 Alphabetic vault by architect William Orchard, Oxford Divinity School, 1480–1483. Photo: Theo Jacobs Photography.

libraries conflates its architectural with its alphabetic underpinnings. Lettered scholars would proceed *through* the ground level of these letters to arrive at the library above by one or two stone staircases (now no longer standing) at the western end of the Divinity School hall; if they entered at the east entrance, they would progress through the entirety of the alphabetic hall with its four hundred and fifty-five bosses, most of them alphabetic, before reaching the stairwell turrets.[62] In either case, with each entry into the library, the architecture would force scholars to proceed literally from their beginning ABC's upward into the fullness of words in narratives contained in the books. A coin-

[62] For the most detailed discussion of the history of the space, see Stanley Gillam, *The Divinity School and Duke Humfrey's Library at Oxford* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1988). Information about the two turrets containing stairs to the library follows from a small 1566 sketch by John Bereblock (p. 23). The vault was built between 1480 and 1483, with the library coming into use first in 1488 (p. 29). For a complete photographic inventory of the bosses, see the *Bodleian Quarterly Record*, 1 (1914), which is based on the work of Sir W. St. John Hope, "The heraldry and sculpture of the vault of the Divinity School at Oxford." *Archaeological Journal* 71 (1914), pp. 217–60.

cidence of history had inspectors on three occasions discover the vault to be providing the support for the above floor, although the vault was never designed to do so and on occasion sustained minor damages.[63] The letters actually provided the physical support for books.

Created about a century later in 1588, a second important library, the Vatican Library, does support its massive hall with alphabetic columns. Six large pilasters running through the center of the Salone Sistino feature the supposed creators of various scripts and even of individual letters upon eight columns, each painted on all four sides with a different figure.[64] (fig. 5.12) The pilasters rise up from hidden bookcases at their bases, with the scripts appearing near the top of their columns, as if the letters were distillations of the books concealed below. In commissioning these pilasters and the entire space Pope Sixtus V aimed for the realization of a particularly performative program. The frescoes cycle through the development of the scripts with a chronological thrust leading from Adam, the first user of language, appearing at the one end of the large space to Christ, the Alpha- and-Omega incarnation of the Word, appearing at the other. The Salone Sistino was built in the middle of the Belvedere Courtyard, the "teatro" site of outdoor papal entertainments initiated by Pius IV. His inheritor substituted frescoes for pageantry, and the performance of learning and book collection took the stage. Sixtine V even repurposed the stone seats from the theater to create the library's foundation.[65] Books and scholars have become the thespians, each supported by a particular script. The frescoes along one side of the room depict the major libraries of the ancient world, setting the Library (and its building) not merely on par with them, and suggesting rather that the holdings surpass them with a more encompassing multi-lingual and, especially, multi-scripted collection.[66] It may not be alphabetic space, but it is

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[63] Gillam, *The Divinity School and Duke Humfrey's Library*, pp. 65–67, 72–76.

[64] Adam and Christ, painted on the wall at either end of the hall, are part of the series but not on individual pilasters. Sixtus V has painted himself to the right of Adam as a second "first man," bringing the light of many languages, in the form of books printed in many scripts, to the world.

[65] In Angela Böck, *Das Dekorations-programm der Lesesaal der Vatikanischen Bibiliothek* (Munich:tuduv, 1988), p. 15. Also in Gregorio Leti. *The Life of Pope Sixtus the Fifth*… trans. Ellis Farneworth (London: W. Bowyer, 1754), p. 368. Böck's monograph constitutes the most complete source on the decoration of the Salone Sistino.

[66] The programmatic superseded the artistic: Cesare Nebbio and Giovanni Guerra, and the artists of their workshop, are responsible for the record painting of the room: one hundred frescoes in only ten days. This statistic is reported by Giovanni Morello

Fig. 5.12 Fresco series "The Inventor Inventors of Alphabets" in the Salone Sistino,Vatican Library, Rome, 1588. Photo: after Giovanni Morello and Pierluigi Silvan. *Vedute di Roma: dai dipinti della Biblioteca apostolica vaticana* (Milan: Electa, 1997), pp. 42–43.

certainly *alphabetized* space, the solid stone counterpoint to the fantasy architectonic alphabet.

As a final note within the arch of this argument linking the physical edifice of the Gothic cathedral to the edificatory qualities of letters, the choir stall deserves further attention. The letters bear the most

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Morello and Pierluigi Silvan, *Vedute di Roma: dai dipinti della Biblioteca apostolica vaticana* (Milano: Electa, 1997), p. 41. Critics suggest that the library's program resulted from a collaboration between Federigo Rainaldi [or Frederico Ranaldi] and the poet and cardinal Silvio Antoniano (Böck, *Das Dekorations-programm,* p. 18). For more on the particular frescoes as observed by a Renaissance contemporaries, see Muzio (or Mutio) Pansa, *Della libraria Vaticana*…(Rome: G. Martinelli, 1590), in the section entitled "Di tutti huomini illustri per l'inuentione delle lettere" and Angelo Rocca, *Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana a Sixto V. Pont. Max in splendidorum commodiorumq. locum translata*…*Ad. S.D.N. Gregorium XIV* (Rome, 1591). For more recent readings of the overall fresco programs of the Salone Sistino beyond Böck's monograph also see Maurizio Calvesi and Lorenzo Canova, ed, *Rejoice!: 700 Years of Art for the Papal Jubilee*, trans. Rhoda Billingsley (New York : Rizzoli, 1999), pp. 110–111. Oechslin also discusses several columns in "Architektur und Alphabet," pp. 221–224.

similarity to this 'real world' Late Gothic architecture. The multi-tiered corbels into which each letter stalactites and the intricate verticality of their many colonettes, lancet windows, and crocket-covered finials evoke the designs of many Netherlandish carved wooden choir stalls. This is also the part of the church most directly linked to the production of human sound—the collective song of the choir members singing below it. Architecture in general shapes human sound: the spaces in which they are produced regulates our "inside voices." Spaces may create communicative confusion, just as dissonant discourses about architecture can create semiotic ambiguity around the interpretation of buildings. As an architecture redolent with the echoes of voice, the choir stall serves as an appropriate model for letters, who carry phonetic resonances of their own.

The architectonic ABC's carry this echo of life within them. Although they do not teem with people and animals like Master E.S.'s figured letters, they do resist forming dead, empty spaces. Substituting for dramas of the body, their leaf patterns and their humor add an organic dynamism and living drama to the collection. Letters are meant to be used, meant to be filled in with human life and human thought. The architectonic letters provide spaces around which growth—semiotic, organic, spiritual—occurs. They are rarely strictly geometric: most have stiff-leaf flourishes as vague serifs or as a merely decorative, not integral, features; three letters, *i, y*, and *z* consist entirely of leaves. The *x* consists of a very odd crossbreed of a tower woven through with a stalk ductus, terminating on the top end with a leaf, and on the bottom end in a little bud. (fig. 5.4) Intertwined through this rosetta stone" letter's center we see a different kind of leaf with two bunches of grapes. The productive cross-pollination of pure architectural forms and organic matter bears fruit, as if to say "I am half alive, half stone."

These hybrid forms of organic and inorganic matter appear as symptomatic of the alphabet's general give-and-take nature. The alphabet displays this characteristic on a macro-scale as an amalgam of architecture and letters whose identities fall on the borderline of legibility. As a tool, the alphabet is caught up in a nexus of exchange, a give-and-take, between readers and written texts. We also have some indication that the architectonic alphabet itself may also have served as a gift in an exchange between readers. A little note, dated by Springer to the late sixteenth century, on the back of the 1400 Berlin alphabet comments that the alphabet had been gifted to a certain Hans Balthasar by his

"beloved" cousin Maria Crydenhaberj.[67] Given by a female reader to a male one, that alphabet once negotiated an important gender line.

The movement of this alphabet through European space furnishes a curious postscript to a discussion of alphabetic space. Jaro Springer was right to note that the architectonic letters "had no procreative force," whereas "the figure-alphabet…was long-lived and gave rise to numerous imitations.[68] It would not be until three hundred years later that full architectural alphabets reappear, first in 1773 when the architect Johann David Steingruber designed a set of floor plans, the "Architectonisches Alphabet," based on each letter of the alphabet. (fig. 5.13) Midolle produced an architectural alphabet in his 1834/35 *Ouevres de Jean Midolle*, including the "Gothique composée," the one most in the spirit of its fifteenth century predecessor. In 1839 Antonio Basoli produced a stunning series of architectonic letters in "Alfabeto Pittorico." A few years later in 1843, de Pian and L. Müller executed and published an architectonic alphabet lithograph series. Mid-century A. Caulo fashioned some vaguely architectural letters: statuary peoples this 1856 Roman alphabet's corbel shelves. In historicizing "architectonic alphabets," the understanding of "alphabet" and "architecture" breaks down. . Do we call letters that spell out a name or initials used as an architectural floor plan an "alphabet?" Then we must admit John Thorpe's use of his own initials in Roman capitals for his planned sixteenth century country house as the next architectonic "alphabet" in the visual arts.[69] Do we call individual, architecturally

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[67] Springer, *Gothic Alphabets*, p. 3.

[68] Springer, *Gothic Alphabets*, p. 7.

[69] Thorpe lived and worked sometime between 1565 and 1651, according to Berthold Wolpe, introduction to *Architectural Alphabet 1773*, trans. E.M. Hatt. (New York: George Braziller, 1975), p. 14; see pp. 104 and 107 for images.Thorpe fully exploits the visual, pictorial, and semantic features of letters: in a poem describing the drawing he writes: "Thes 2 letters, I and T / <being> ioyned together as you see /Is mete for a dwelling howse for mee /John Thorpe." I and T function not only as personalized structural design, but as the basis for rhyme and for the visual features of poetry in the phrase "*I*oyned *T*ogether" John Summerson, ed. *The Book of Architecture of John Thorpe in Sir John Soane's Museum* (Glasgow: R. Maclehose, University Press, 1966), p. 59.

Also not a full alphabet and appearing prior to Steingruber's, Thomas Gobert's 1680 floor plans spell out "Louis le Grand" in tribute to Louis XIV. Further deliberately alphabetic floor plans follow after Steingruber's, with A. Glonner in 1774 and F. Roppelt in 1783, both using the Christogram "IHS." For more information on the alphabets referred to in this paragraph, see Massin, *Word and Image*; Oechslin, "Architektur und Alphabet"; and Kiermeier-Debre, Joseph and Fritz Franz Vogel.

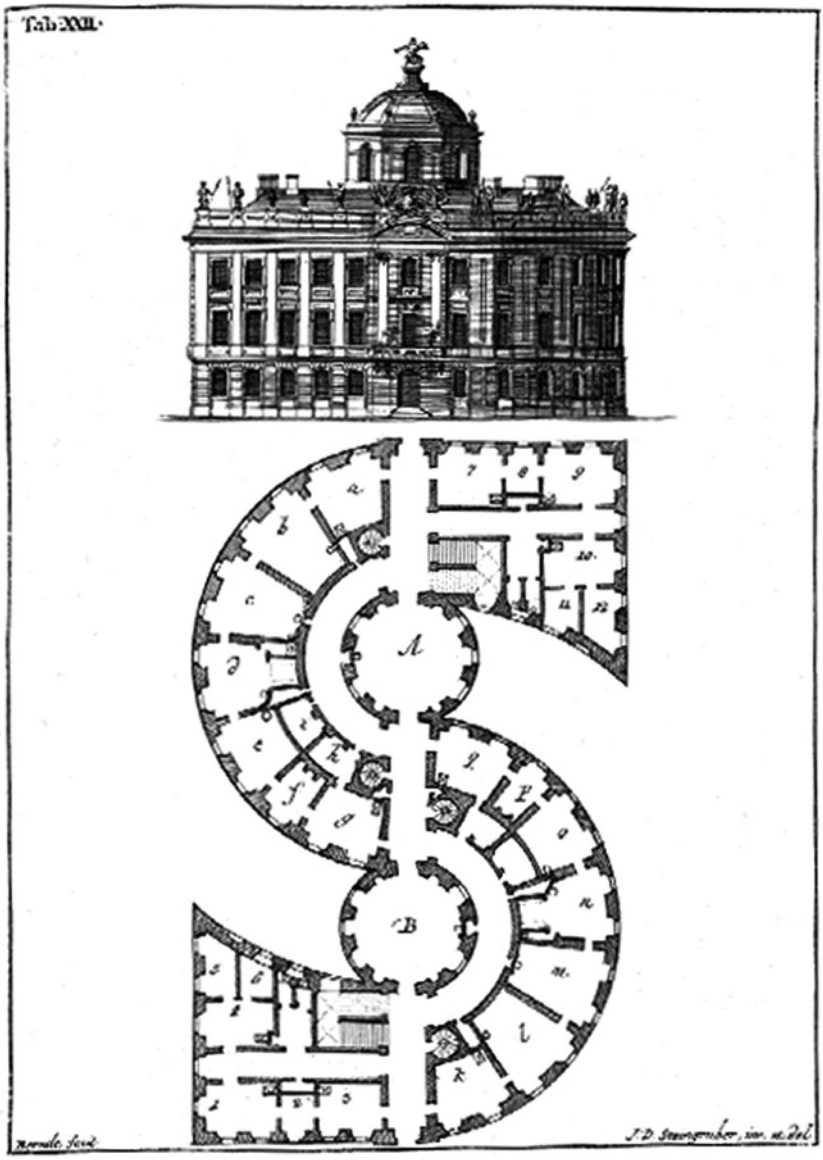

Fig. 5.13 Floor plan in the shape of an S, "Architectonisches Alphabet" by Johann David Steingruber, 1773. Photo: after Johann David Steingruber, *Architectural alphabet* (New York: G. Braziller, 1975), p. 68.

suggestive letters in an alphabet, letters that vaguely resemble architectural objects, architecture? Then our next architectonic alphabet might be I. Paulini's wonderful mythic alphabet of *c.* 1570, with columnar capitals in some of its capitals. However we are to define them, architectural alphabets never enjoyed the popularity of figured alphabets, despite the fundamental relevance of their images to our everyday experience of the world.

Letters, unlike architecture, rarely stay in place. The physical afterlife of the fifteenth century master's work finds itself anagrammatically split up and dispersed, pushed and pulled, throughout Europe and across the Atlantic. The only perfect copy of the whole set resides in Bologna; individual letters may be found in Erlangen, Vienna, Dresden, and a letter *d* resides in Washington D.C.'s National Gallery. While the integrity of various sets has been compromised, the constituent letters' inhabitation of various different architectural spaces points to how letters rarely stay in place, neither physically nor ideologically. Their users push and pull them constantly into new systems and new contexts, new forms and new buildings.

Das Alphabet: die Bildwelt der Buchstaben von A bis Z (Ravensburg: Ravensburger Buchverlag, 1995).

PART II

IMAGINED PILGRIMAGE AND SPIRITUAL TOURISM

6. STILL WALKING: SPIRITUAL PILGRIMAGE, EARLY DUTCH PAINTING, AND THE DYNAMICS OF FAITH

Henry Luttikhuizen

> For every walk is a sort of crusade, preached by some Peter the Hermit in us, to go forth and reconquer this Holy Land from the hands of the Infidels.
>
> Henry David Thoreau[1]

Thinking on one's feet is not merely a matter of standing up straight. It typically demands dynamics, the taking of steps. One can, of course, wander in error, but for centuries, the search for knowledge has been intricately tied to moving one's feet. According to the ancient Roman adage, one sometimes falsely attributed to Saint Augustine, when a problem arises, we should "solve it by walking (*Solvitur ambulando*)."[2] Pedestrian travel, it was believed, fostered well-being. Not only could a leisurely stroll through a garden or grove improve a person's medical health, but it could also help him or her sort things out. It could make someone a better thinker. Walking provides opportunities for inspiration and clarity. The journey, the process of moving from one place to another, may be just as meaningful as reaching a final destination. The experience of taking a stroll in the countryside or to another pleasant place offers the needed time and space to discover better answers to life's practical questions. Walking helps pedestrians find solutions, to see the proper next course of action.

During the late Middle Ages, people were deeply concerned about the health of their souls. They went on pilgrimages for a variety of reasons—to perform penance for a crime, to obtain a miraculous cure, to acquire indulgences, or to gain something else. But it is safe to say that nearly all pilgrims traveled with hope, the expectation that such a journey was beneficial, that it would be good for them and for those

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[1] Henry David Thoreau, *Walking* (1862; rep., New York: Cosimo, 2006), p. 2.

[2] For an interesting description of the significance of walking in the phenomenological tradition, see Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), esp. pp. 222–28.

they loved.[3] Participating in a sacred pilgrimage may have offered a good chance to see the world, but it was more than a wandering adventure, for it was directed toward reaching a specific site, an exceptional spot, one associated with past miracles, a place where one could look beyond the mundane in preparation for meeting the holy.

Pilgrimages are not merely journeys taken with the feet. The distance they cover is impossible to calculate solely in terms of miles or steps. If that were so, spiritual pilgrimages would lose their meaning. For pilgrimages to be effective, they must always be journeys of the soul or heart. One can travel on such a pilgrimage while remaining still, but it is irresponsible to stop, for the journey must continue. There is always somewhere further to go. Consequently, the devout must still do more. Spiritual pilgrimages are never complete.

The spiritual exercise of showing oneself before an invisible God demanded more than travel. It required a contrite heart and the zeal to protect this sacred location from the pollutions of sin and the dangers of false religion. To face the divine, viators were obliged to confront the presence of evil and work towards its eradication. Participants were called to purify their hearts and preserve the Holy Lands, as places where God dwells. Long after they returned home, pilgrims were still expected to maintain spiritual cleanliness. Sacred journeys did not end this responsibility, but extended it. Even though a pilgrimage might enable one to experience the presence of the divine, it cannot, properly speaking, provide a final resting place, for mystical union with God is always to come. Consequently, to be meaningful, pilgrimage must continue throughout life and cannot be reduced to a single exercise. Although making a journey to a holy site has its potential spiritual benefits, the believer is called to keep going, to walk unceasingly in faith.

To maintain their capacity for perpetual pilgrimage, artists and patrons in late medieval Holland tried to bring Jerusalem home in imaginative ways. For instance, in Gouda, a little Gothic chapel, loosely designed after the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, was built under the supervision of a priest who had visited the Holy

[3] Jonathan Sumpton, *Pilgrimage: An Image of Medieval Religion* (London: Faber and Faber, 1975). For more on the relationship between images and pilgrimages, see David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 99–135.

Lands.[4] Appropriately named the Jeruzalemkapel, the chapel not only commemorated the appearance of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, it also encouraged visitors, whether they had ever been to Jerusalem or not, to reenact pilgrimages to the sacred site of Christ's tomb spiritually as they prayerfully meditated on the life of Christ from Gouda.[5]

Architecture was not the only way in which late medieval Hollanders attempted to shorten the distance between holy places and their hometowns. Prayer nuts, pomanders, pilgrimage badges, carved altarpieces, travel guides, devotional literature, illuminated manuscripts, processions, drama were all used to promote spiritual or imaginative pilgrimages.[6] In this essay, we will concentrate on the ways in which two early Dutch paintings, a small diptych likely produced by the workshop of Geertgen tot Sint Jans and a large panel from a now lost altarpiece attributed to the Master of the Figdor Deposition, encouraged late medieval viewers to make imaginative journeys to holy places, to distant lands endowed with meaning from the sacred past, in the hopes of witnessing or gaining access to a miraculous event, an apparition of the divine.

Pilgrimages are always a matter of vision, of moving the eyes, even if the feet do not. Late medieval peregrinates undertook these religious journeys, both physical and spiritual, precisely because they sought the sacred. In other words, they looked for the holy at specific sites in hopes of seeing manifestations of the invisible God. Spiritual pilgrimages could be performed with eyes shut, but they were still predicated

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[4] *De Jeruzalem-kapel in Gouda*, ed. Chris Akkerman (Gouda: Spoor, 1998). For more on imitations of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, see Richard Krautheimer, "Introduction to an 'Iconography of Medieval Architecture,'" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942), pp. 1–33; Laura Gelfand's essay in this volume.

[5] For more on spiritual pilgrimages, see Jan van Herwaarden, *Between Saint James and Erasmus. Studies in Late-Medieval Religious Life: Devotion and Pilgrimage in the Netherlands* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), esp. pp. 67–76. Cf. Kathryn Rudy, "A Guide to Mental Pilgrimage: Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal ms. 212," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 63/4 (2000), pp. 495–515; Kathryn Rudy, "A Pilgrim's Book of Hours: Stockholm Royal Library A233," *Studies in Iconography* 21 (2000), pp. 237–79; Matthew Botvinick, "The Painting as Pilgrimage: Traces of a Subtext in the Work of Campin and His Contemporaries," *Art History* 15 (1992), pp. 1–18.

[6] Reindert Falkenburg, "Toys for the Soul' Prayer-Nuts and Pomanders in Late Medieval Devotion," in Reindert Falkenburg and Frits Scholten, *A Sense of Heaven: 16th-Century Boxwood Carvings for Private Devotion*, exhib. cat. (Leeds: Henry Moore Institute, 1999), pp. 32–47. For more on late medieval pilgrimage badges, see the multi-volume series, *Heilig en profaan*, eds. H.J.E. van Beuningen, A.M. Koldeweij and D. Kicken (Cothen: Stichting Middeleeuwse Religieuze en Profane Insignes, 1993–).

on optical experience. Visual images promote spiritual pilgrimages because they make the prospect of a sacred apparition appear more tangible. They reinforce the notion that miracles can and do happen by suggesting that the intended goal of such a journey can possibly be reached. In other words, visual images helped persuade beholders that the divine could arrive and make its presence known.

One of the most interesting and complicated images promoting such a spiritual pilgrimage is a small diptych attributed to the Haarlem painter Geertgen tot Sint Jans and his workshop and dated circa 1490.[7] The two panels of this devotional image are no longer intact. Today, the diptych is rarely viewed as a whole. One of the panels is currently housed in Scotland's National Gallery of Art (fig. 6.1) and the other resides in the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen (fig. 6.2). Still, there is no debate concerning the relationship of the two panels. The size of the pictures and the style of their rendering provide strong evidence that the panels initially belonged together. In a nineteenth-century auction, the two paintings are catalogued as pendants from the collection of Cardinal Fesch.[8] Unfortunately, there is insufficient documentation to indicate its patronage or its original setting. Nearly fifty years ago, James Snyder suggested that the diptych may have been commissioned for a one of the Haarlem Dominicans or a member of the city's Confraternity of the Rosary.[9] Although this remains a possibility, there is not enough information to prove that this is the case. Nonetheless, the complex theological character of the image points to an ecclesiastical patron or a highly sophisticated member of the laity.[10]

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[7] Molly Faries, "Geertgen tot Sint Jans: continuing studies of the painting process," *Simiolus* 33 (2008), pp. 22–32. For a technical study of this particular diptych, see catalogue entry 11 in *Prayers and Portraits: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych*, eds. John Hand, Catherine Metzger, and Ron Spronk (Washington: National Gallery of Art and Antwerp: Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, 2006), pp. 88–93, 313.

[8] The connection between these two panels was first noted by Suzanne Sulzberger, "La Glorification de la Vierge de Gérard de Saint Jean," *Oud Holland* 74 (1959), p. 169; and J. Q. van Regteren Altena, "The Glorification of the Virgin by Geertgen tot Sint Jans—Postscriptum," *Oud Holland* 74 (1959), pp. 169–72.

[9] James Snyder, "The Early Haarlem School of Painting. II. Geertgen tot Sint Jans," *Art Bulletin* 42 (1960), pp. 131–32.

[10] Bernhard Ridderbos, "The Rotterdam-Edinburgh Diptych: *Maria in Sole* and the Devotion of the Rosary," in *Gebed in schoonheid. Schatten van prive-devotie in Europa, 1300–1500/The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe, 1300–1500*, eds. Henk van Os, Hans Nieuwdorp, and Bernhard Ridderbos, trans. Michael Hoyle (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum/Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 156.

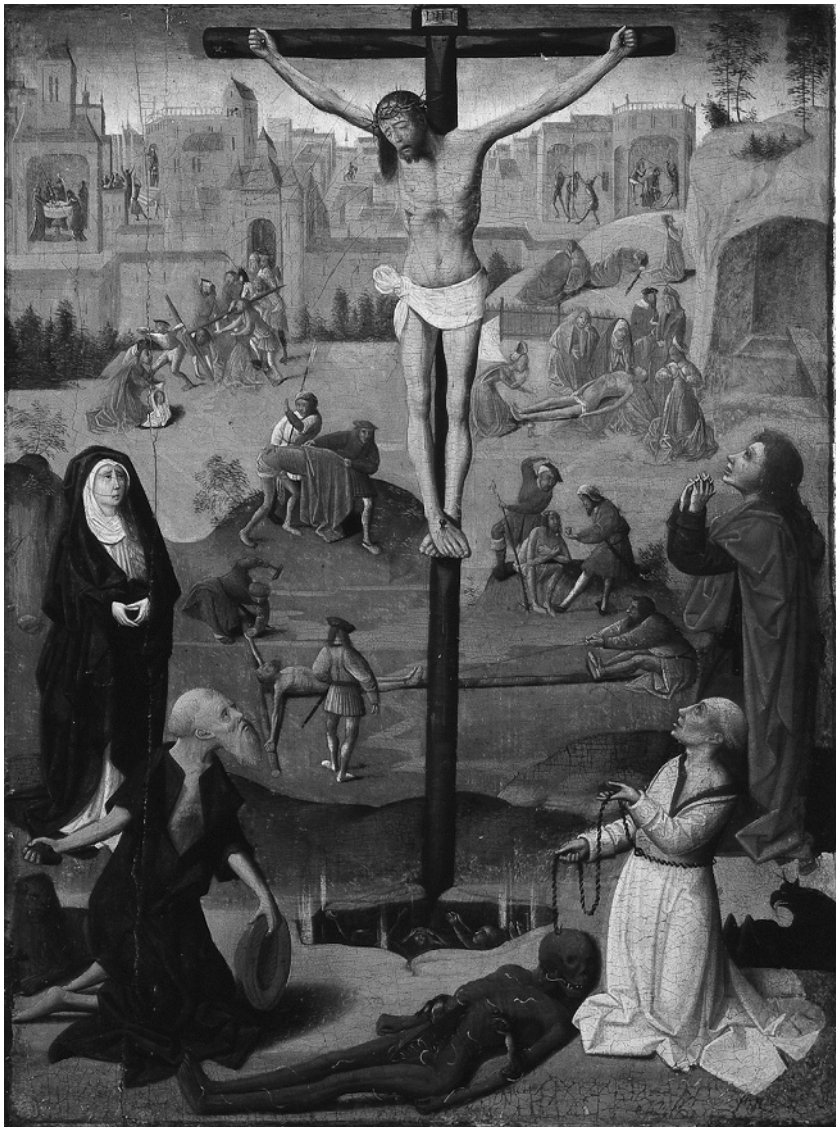

Fig. 6.1 Geertgen tot Sint Jans and his workshop, *The Crucifixion with Saints Jerome and Dominic and Scenes of the Passion, c.* 1490, 26.8 × 20.5 cm, oil on panel, Edinburgh, National Galleries of Scotland. Photo by permission.

Fig. 6.2 Geertgen tot Sint Jans and his workshop, *The Glorification of the Virgin, c.* 1490, 26.8 × 20.5 cm, oil on panel, Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen. Photo by permission.

The Edinburgh panel represents the Passion of Christ with Saints Jerome and Dominic in the foreground. Although the cityscape in the background may resemble a late medieval European city, viewers are encouraged to meditate on the life, death, and resurrection of Christ as if they were witnessing these events first hand. The sequence of the numerous narrative scenes is not consistent. They do not progress in a simple linear fashion, to do so would disrupt the continuous flow of the landscape as the story unfolds.[11] Consequently, some scenes appear out of order with that of the text. However, this visual rearrangement does not contradict the narrative. On the contrary, it fostered a closer reading, a deeper understanding of the Passion, by encouraging viewers to look actively for specific vignettes rather than take a passive glance from one scene to the next.

The painting promotes heartfelt empathy by inviting observers to concentrate on particular moments.[12] In the background, miniature vignettes of the Last Supper, Ecce Homo, Flagellation, and Crowning with Thorns can be seen. As viewers imaginatively travels across the cityscape, they are encouraged to pause, to take time and meditate on the significance of each scene. The same holds true for the four events represented just beyond the gates of Jerusalem: the Agony in the Garden, the Carrying of the Cross, the Lamentation, and the Resurrection, indicated by the empty tomb. Viewers are asked to stop and commemorate Christ's suffering, as they prayerfully prepare for his triumphal return.

In the middle ground of the panel, tormentors continue to persecute Christ. On the left, two men pull off his garment. The stripping of Christ's clothes not only points to further humiliation, it also anticipates the soldiers gambling for his robe. To the right, a man lifts his arm in preparation to strike Christ, while another mockingly extends a cup. Their actions reinforce the continual torture of Christ throughout the Passion. In addition, the scene foretells future events.

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[11] This painting is not unique in representing multiple scenes from the life on Christ in a single panel. Hans Memlinc's *Passion Scenes* (Galleria Sabauda, Turin, *c.* 1480) is the most famous early Netherlandish example.

[12] For more on early Netherlandish panels showing multiple scenes simultaneously, see Ehrenfried Kluckert, "Die Simultanbilder Memlings: Ihre Wurzeln und Wirkung," *Das Münster* 27 (1974), pp. 284–95; Norbert Schneider, "Zur Ikonographie von Memlings 'Die sieben Freuden Mariens,'" *Müncher Jahrbuch* 24 (1973), pp. 2–32; Jeremy Bangs, *Cornelis Engebrechtsz.'s Leiden. Studies in a Cultural History* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1970).

The lifting of the cup can be viewed as a prelude to the sinister offering of the vinegar soaked sponge to quench Christ's thirst. The posture of Christ, seated with arms folded in humility, may have also reminded beholders of images representing Christ on the Cold Stone, an extra-Biblical scene of contemplating his Passion immediately after the Resurrection.[13] Directly, below these two scenes, Christ is stretched out and nailed upon an elongated cross. The intensity of his suffering is conveyed by the way in which an executioner yields his hammer and large size of the nails penetrating his flesh. At the foot of the laid-out cross, another man tightly pulls on a rope tied to Christ's feet, extending his body to the fullest, in preparation for the nailing of his feet. The two executors appear to work under the supervision of a well-dressed gentleman, who stands in a courtier-like pose. Although his face is concealed from the viewer, it is easy to imagine him as the antithesis of the ideal beholder, for he seems to look without regard for Christ. The overseer appears to lack empathy. He seems to look without using the eyes of his heart. Unwilling to share Christ's pain, to suffer with him, the supervisor stands in nonchalance and self-confidence, untouched by the scene he witnesses. By contrast, pious observers are expected to be compassionate and identify with Christ.

The central event of the Passion is, of course, the Crucifixion, and not surprisingly, it is represented directly in the middle of the panel. The scene is also rendered significantly larger than the rest of the events, reinforcing its importance. Christ appears dead. Even though little blood is shown, the crown of thorns and the pull of gravity on his elongated limbs reveal the anguish he endured. The Virgin Mary and Saint John the Beloved stand on opposite sides of the cross. Viewers are encouraged to empathize with their grief, as they mourn the dead Christ. Conformity with these holy figures demands more than emotional sentiment. Both figures look up at Christ with reddened eyes indicating the strength and length of their devotion. They also fold their hands in prayer, offering an appropriate response for pious observers to follow. The strict frontality and monumental scale of the Crucifixion distinguish it from the other Passion scenes, affirming the notion that Christ's sacrifice should not be reduced to a historical

[13] There are numerous fifteenth- and sixteenth-century sculptures and prints of Christ as the Man of Sorrows seated on a cold stone. The most famous example is probably Albrecht Dürer's frontispiece for the *Small Passion* series (1509–11).

event. The Crucifixion carries liturgical meaning, for the gift of salvation is reenacted perpetually in each celebration of the Mass. Christ's sacrifice, his death on the cross, offers atonement for sin and victory over death.

This triumph is reinforced by the depiction of the dark dragon appearing below the saint's crimson cloak. According to the Golden Legend, the high priest of Diana at the Temple of Ephesus tried to kill Saint John by coaxing the saint to prove the truth of Christian faith by drinking from a chalice filled with poison supplied from a dragon. Armed with the sign of the Cross, the saint miraculously passes the pagan cleric's test and is unharmed by poison.[14] The healing strength given by Christ enables John to defeat death.

Directly below the foot of the elevated cross, there is a deep pit filled with devout souls undergoing purgation. Surrounded by flames, they look up to the crucified Christ, praying for sooner ascendency to heaven. The presence of these figures not only reminded late medieval viewers of their obligation to pray for the dead, it also revealed the spiritual value of pilgrimages. Participation in such a journey, like the acquisition of indulgences, could reduce the amount of time one spends in Purgatory. In effect, it could get them to heaven more rapidly.[15]

Nearby, the large decaying corpse, riddled with numerous worms and two flesh-eating monsters resembling lizards, serves as an effective *memento mori*. The cadaver presents an antithesis to the crucified Christ. Whereas death provides material food for earthbound scavengers, Christ's body and blood offers spiritual nourishment for life anew. To receive grace, however, the believer must ask for forgiveness. The construction of a contrite heart requires penance.[16] In addition, indulgences are not granted without contrite confession. Two kneeling

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[14] Jacobus de Voragine, *Legenda aurea*, trans. William Granger Ryan as *The Golden Legend*, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 53.

[15] For more on Purgatory, see Christoph Auffarth, *Irdische Wege und himmlischer Lohn: Kreuzzug, Jerusalem und Fegefeuer in religionswissenschaftliche Perspektive* (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck and Ruprecht, 2002); Jacques Le Goff, *La naissance du Purgatoire* (1981), trans. Arthur Goldhammer as *The Birth of Purgatory* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1984). For more on indulgences, see Robert Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England: Passports to Paradise?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Nikolaus Paulus, *Indulgences as a Social Factor in the Middle Ages* (New York: Devin-Adair, 1922).

[16] Heiko Oberman, *The Harvest of the Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1963), pp. 146–54.

saints adjacent to the corpse look to Christ and serve as models for beholders to imitate.

On the left, Saint Jerome, accompanied by the attribute of his lion, prepares to strike his chest with a rock. The desert father repeatedly beat himself to renounce the temptations of the flesh and to find peace in Christ.[17] On the right, Saint Dominic whips himself with a rope tied around waist. Small drops of blood can be seen dripping down his left shoulder. The penitential acts of Jerome and Dominic are not merely practices aimed at punishing the flesh. On the contrary, they are spiritual exercises, efforts to imitate Christ.[18] They sacrifice, give of themselves, in hopes of making room in their hearts for God.

Their self-flagellation is performed to promote spiritual training, an inner reformation of the heart. Jerome and Dominic do not call observers to torture their bodies, but to purge their hearts of sin.[19] Contrition can be used as a corrective measure to combat sin and obey God. Through continual practice, it can foster spiritual strength and discipline. Like pilgrimage, penance is best understood as a life-long process of purification in preparation for reconciliation with God. And yet, without penance, pilgrimages lose their meaning.

As mentioned earlier, this panel was originally attached to another. The second half of this diptych represents an apocalyptic scene of *Maria in Sole*, Mary in the Sun. The juxtaposition of depictions of the Crucifixion with images of *Maria in Sole* was not uncommon in late medieval diptychs. Rarely, however, do they possess the iconographical complexity offered by these two panels.

Like other images of the *Maria in Sole*, the Rotterdam painting shows the Virgin Mary as the Apocalyptic Woman described in Revelation 1:12. She is clothed by the sun and rests upon a crescent moon. The Virgin wears a delicate crown decorated with tiny red asterisks, representing the twelve stars noted in the biblical text, and crushes a dark red-striped dragon under her feet, as foretold in Genesis 3:15. Although she is the daughter of Eve, the Virgin is able to help conquer Satan, who is symbolized by the dragon. Not only is

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[17] *The Golden Legend*, vol. 2, pp. 211–16.

[18] Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), pp. 125–47.

[19] For a fascinating discussion on the erotics of self-flagellation, see Nikolaus Largier, *Lob der Peitsche: Eine Kulturgeschichte der Erregung* (2001), trans. Graham Harman as *In Praise of the Whip: A Cultural History of Arousal* (New York: Zone, 2007).

she able to resist the temptation of sin, Mary also participates in the reversal of the Fall. In her arms, she holds the means of redemption, the Christ child who, as the New Adam, will ultimately defeat Satan and restore creation in harmony with God. Images of the *Maria in Sole* effectively mark the Virgin's role in triumph over sin. They were used to highlight her perpetual chastity and more importantly, to promote the theological doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, the principle that Mary was conceived without sin, a popular belief frequently endorsed by Franciscans.[20]

Pope Sixtus IV, the late fifteenth-century pontiff from the Franciscan Order, is said to have promised eleven-thousand years of indulgence to anyone who recited the *Ave Sanctissima Maria*, a prayer dedicated to the Virgin in support of the Immaculate Conception, before an image of the *Maria in Sole*.[21] Not surprisingly, with this papal endorsement and the promise of indulgences, depictions of this subject gained immense popularity throughout Europe.[22]

However, the *Ave Sanctissima Maria* may not have been the prayer spoken most often in front of the Rotterdam panel. The chaplet of roses serving as the basis of the Virgin's crown suggests otherwise. During the latter half of the fifteenth century, two Dominican monks, Alanus de Rupe (*c.* 1428–75) and Jakob Sprenger (*c.* 1436–95), promoted the cult of the rosary.[23] In 1474, Sprenger established the Confraternity of the Rosary, a lay brotherhood dedicated to promoting greater veneration of the Virgin through the recitation of the *Ave Maria* prayer, in Cologne.[24] Alanus de Rupe advocated for the rosary throughout the Low Countries, until his death in Zwolle. Jacobus Weyts, prior of the

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[20] Marielle Lamy, *L'immaculée conception: Étapes et enjeux d'une controverse au Moyen Âge (XII^e–XV^e siècles)* (Paris: Institut d'Études Augustiniennes, 2000).

[21] The entire prayer reads as follows: *Ave, Sanctissima Maria mater Dei, Regina Coeli, porta Paradisi, Domina mundi, pura singularis: Tu es Virgo, tu sine peccato concepta concepisti Ihesum sine omni macula; tu peperisti creatorem et Salvatorem mundi in quo non dubito. Libera me ab omnia malo et ora pro peccato meo. Amen.* (Hail, Most Holy Mary, mother of God, Queen of Heaven, gate of Paradise, uniquely pure: You are the Virgin, who was conceived without any sin conceived Jesus without any blemish; you carried the creator and Savior of the world, of this, there is no doubt. Free me from all sin and pray for my sins. Amen).

[22] Sixten Ringbom, "*Maria in Sole* and the Virgin of the Rosary," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 25 (1962), pp. 326–30.

[23] Anne Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose: The Making of the Rosary in the Middle Ages* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997).

[24] During the fifteenth-century, the prayer read: *Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum. Benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris, Iesus* (Hail Mary, full

Dominican friary in Haarlem, heard Alanus de Rupe's sermons and was persuaded to establish the first brotherhood of the rosary in the Netherlands (1478). This new confraternity was located in Haarlem, the city where Geertgen tot Sint Jans and his workshop performed their craft, and the Edinburgh-Rotterdam diptych may have been made for one of brotherhood's members.

Confraternities of the Rosary were all under Dominican control. The Dominicans ensured proper devotion occurred within each chapter and new chapters could not be established without the Order's permission. Unlike their mendicant counterparts, Dominicans did not typically endorse the Immaculate Conception. In fact, they were often among the doctrine's strongest critics. Saint Thomas Aquinas, for instance, argued that although the Virgin Mary was indeed pure and innocent of sin, her sanctification did not begin at conception, but later, while she was developing in her mother's womb.[25] Nonetheless, there is no reason to believe that members of the Confraternity of the Rosary would have found the Edinburgh-Rotterdam diptych unacceptable because it depicted Mary as the Apocalyptic Woman, an image with strong associations with the Immaculate Conception. They may have prized the painting for its ability to foster Marian devotion without concerning themselves with the issue. After all, the panel does not explicitly show exactly when sanctification occurred, whether it took place at the moment of animation or later. Indeed, the representation of the Virgin as royalty, as the Queen of Heaven, in *Maria in Sole* imagery magnified her place within the heavenly hierarchy and consequently, reinforced the expectation of proper adoration.

Images were not necessary for praying the rosary, nonetheless, they could help. In fact, Alanus de Rupe encouraged the devout, not just the illiterate, to say the rosary in front of images of Christ and the Virgin Mary.[26] Both figures are present in each of the diptych's two panels. To perform the rosary, participants must recite the prayer of *Ave Maria* 150 times, in imitation of the number of the psalms, and say the *Paternoster* or Lord's Prayer after every ten Hail Marys. Prayer beads were used as effective counting devices, registering progress

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of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus).

[25] Virginia Nixon, *Mary's Mother: Saint Anne in Late Medieval Europe* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), pp. 14–16.

[26] Winston-Allen, pp. 33–34.

within the ritual.[27] Every set of ten *Ave Marias* is associated with one of the fifteen mysteries of the Virgin, her five joys, five sorrows, and five glories. The devout are required to meditate on one of these mysteries during each set of prayers. In the Rotterdam panel, the Virgin's chaplet is made of white and red roses.[28] The flowers are presented in a pattern or series, with groups of five white roses separated by a single red one, an arrangement reminiscent of the division between kinds of prayers offered during the rosary. Furthermore, the chaplet is merely a symbol for the devotional practice, for the rosary is itself a chaplet, a wreath of verbal roses given in honor of the Virgin.

Without a destination, devotional practices seem pointless. The recitation of the rosary, like a pilgrimage, though far less expensive or dangerous, offered indulgences to those who did it. In a papal bull of 1478, Sixtus IV granted indulgences to those who performed the rosary. The amount, however, was far less than that for praying the *Ave Sanctissima Maria*. Saying the rosary earned the believer seven years and seven quadragenes (lents of pardon, consisting of forty days a piece). A year later, Sixtus IV upped the ante to five years and five quadragenes for every fifty *Ave Marias* finished, in effect extending a period of fifteen years and fifteen quadragenes of indulgence to those who completed the rosary in its entirety. The popularity of the rosary and its confraternity spread rapidly. Two years prior to signing the papal bull, Sixtus IV increased the scope of indulgences, enabling those currently suffering in Purgatory as well as others who may be unable to pray for themselves, such as children and the sick, to obtain them.[29] Praying the rosary not only offered indulgence, like a spiritual pilgrimage, it helped the devout meditate on the life and death of Christ in preparation for union with the divine.

In the Rotterdam panel, the Virgin and Child appear in the midst of mystical light, radiating in three concentric rings. In the innermost circle, seraphim angels celebrate the joys of Mary. The bottom half of the second ring contains angels holding the *arma Christi*, the instruments of Christ's Passion, signifying the sorrows of the Virgin. Not by accident, all five of her sorrows also appear in the adjacent panel: (1) Agony in the Garden, (2) the Flagellation, (3) the Crowning of

[27] Winston-Allen, pp. 2–3.
[28] Ridderbos, p. 154.
[29] Winston-Allen, p. 122; Ringbom, p. 329.

Thorns, (4) the Carrying of the Cross, and (5) the Crucifixion. The representation of the *arma Christi* reinforces the devotional link between the diptych's two wings. Like the narrative scenes in the Passion panel, the depicted weapons invite spiritual pilgrimage. They encourage beholders to recall relics and sacred places associated with Christ's suffering. In the upper half of the second circle of light, two angels hold up rosary beads, reinforcing the call for Marian devotion, while four others lift three banners inscribed with the word Holy.

The outermost ring is filled with angels playing various musical instruments, sounding the glories of Mary. In the middle of the image, the Christ child joins their ensemble. He rings two bells. The position of his limbs suggests the movement necessary to play music. Christ's bells may have reminded viewers of the liturgical ones that rang just prior to the Elevation of the Host, but they also imply heavenly concord. As Bernhard Ridderbos has suggested, Christ is not only located in light, he is the light, the source of clarity and harmonic consonance.[30] Playing music with angels, he actively celebrates the coronation of his mother, who is now reunited with him in heaven.

As Anne Winston-Allen has noted, "The adoption of a format for the rosary resembling a kind of ersatz Hours in a symbolic 'psalter' arrangement was thus a doubly attractive design."[31] Something similar can be said for the Edinburgh-Rotterdam diptych. It may have benefited from the tradition of manuscript painting. Like a richly illustrated devotional book, the diptych is magnificent in its artistry, but small enough to transport easily. Even though the diptych's content is not organized in a strictly linear progression, as expected in the arrangement of liturgical hours, its panels were to be interpreted primarily from left to right.

Pilgrimages, even spiritual ones, are closely connected to time. Not only do they promise indulgences and the negation of time in purgatory, they also require temporal performance. It takes time to travel and time to know a place well. According to Saint Augustine, time was a very difficult thing to describe because it could only be discussed in terms of its passing, its transition from one place to another. He compared it to the recitation of a psalm, the process of pronouncing words, fleeting in audibility. Time, to his understanding, was not simply a

[30] Ridderbos, p. 156.
[31] Winston-Allen, p. 80.

measure of distance. Rather, it was something that is experienced within us. It can be found in our memories of the past, our attention to the present, and our expectations for the future.[32] Although fifteenth-century Christians need not have been familiar with Augustine's conception of time, they may have recognized the temporal dimension of reciting the rosary. Furthermore, they may have viewed paintings such as the Edinburgh-Rotterdam diptych in an analogous fashion. After all, the panels encourage beholders to look backwards and forwards, to focus their attention of the present as they remember Christ's Passion in the biblical past and prepare for the heavenly vision anticipated in Revelation.

Time is like light. In itself, time is invisible and yet, the visible happens in time, as in light. Spiritual pilgrimages happened internally, within the innermost self. Although unseen, the heart is where the journey occurs. Like the recitation of the rosary, seeing the Edinburgh-Rotterdam diptych with the eyes of the heart not only required the devout to meditate on the joys, sorrows, and glories of Mary, but also to imitate the Virgin. It called upon observers to make a home for Christ in their hearts.[33] Such a gesture demanded more than merely opening one's heart to God. It also required self-sacrifice, an emptying out.

According to legend, one promoted by Alanus de Rupe, the institution of the rosary was based on a miraculous vision.[34] Reportedly, Saint Dominic told Alanus that he had encountered a sacred apparition of the Virgin while flagellating himself before an image of the cross. Incidentally, this narrative is depicted in a panel painting copied after Geertgen tot Sint Jans now housed in Leipzig.[35] Like the legend, the Edinburgh-Rotterdam diptych advocates a reformation of the heart in conformity with Mary.

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[32] Saint Augustine, *Confessiones*, XI, 1–31, esp. 21, trans. Rex Warner as *The Confessions* (New York: New American Library, 1963), pp. 257–84.

[33] Cf. Reindert Falkenberg, "The Household of the Soul: Conformity in the *Mérode Triptych*," in *Early Netherlandish Painting at the Crossroads: A Critical Look at Current Methodologies*, ed. Maryan Ainsworth (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2001), pp. 2–17; and Jeffrey Hamburger, *Nuns as Artists: The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), pp. 137–76.

[34] Winston-Allen, p. 72.

[35] Ridderbos, p. 155; Grete Ring, "Attempt to Reconstruct a Lost Geertgen Composition," *Burlington Magazine* 94 (1952), p. 147.

Purification fostered mystical union. Throughout the Middle Ages, Christian travelers made the trek to the Holy Lands in hopes of receiving indulgences, abbreviating the necessary time of purgation. Spiritual pilgrimages, however, did not offer quite the same benefits. They did not carry as much social prestige as actually following in the Christ's footsteps. In addition, spiritual pilgrimages were more difficult to verify. No souvenir badges could be purchased to commemorate imaginative journeys. Nonetheless, spiritual pilgrimages offered certain advantages. Not only were they easier to perform, but they could also be repeated more frequently. When accompanied with proper prayer and devotion, such imaginative travels could even provide indulgence, accelerating the journey of the soul towards God.[36] Paintings such as the Edinburgh-Rotterdam diptych pointed beholders in the right direction by indicating ways for the devout to travel in the pilgrimage of life as they make a place for God in their hearts. But what does it mean to walk in faith and how can one see it? Saints, such as St Lucy, provided late medieval Christians with ideal models to imitate.

Most of us associate faith with beliefs and convictions transcending the boundaries of rationality. Faith, it is often assumed, cannot be explained or proven, for it cannot be illuminated by logical argument. The light of reason cannot penetrate its meaning. But this is not to say that faith is insignificant to either our thoughts or our deeds. As the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein put it, "If I have exhausted the justifications, I have reached bedrock, and my spade is turned. Then I am inclined to say: "This is simply what I do."[37] For Wittgenstein, faith may reside at the end of reasoning, always below the surface of conceptual diggings, nonetheless, it is deeply contacted with human experience, affecting how we live and think. Reason may

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[36] Henri Defoer, "Images as Aids for Earning the Indulgences of Rome," in *Tributes in Honor of James H. Marrow. Studies in Painting and Manuscript Illumination of the Late Middle Ages and Northern Renaissance*, eds. Jeffrey Hamburger and Anne Korteweg (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), pp. 163–71; Kathryn Rudy, "*Den aflaet der heiliger stat Jherusalem ende des berchs van Calvarien*: Indulgenced Prayers for Mental Holy Land Pilgrimages in Manuscripts from the St Agnes Convent in Maaseik," *Ons geestelijk erf* 74 (2000), pp. 211–54; and Nine Miedema, "Following in the Footsteps of Christ: Pilgrimage and Passion Devotion," in *The Broken Body: Passion Devotion in Late-Medieval Culture*, eds. A.A. McDonald, Bernhard Ridderbos, and Rita Schlusemann (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998), pp. 73–92.

[37] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen*, § 217 (posthumously, 1953), trans. G.E.M. Anscombe as *Philosophical Investigations*, 3rd ed. (London: Blackwell, 1991), p. 72.

be blind to the inner workings of faith, but this is not to say that faith is completely invisible. The bedrock, after all, is seen, marking the limitations of rational insight.

Recognition of the ambiguous relationship between faith and vision is nothing new. Saint Augustine, for instance, noted the futility of looking at this world in the darkness of sin, but he also warned against the folly of being in the light while keeping one's eyes shut.[38] Mystical insight, which demanded closing one's eyes to see inward, did not curtail responsibility; rather it exposed a greater obligation to love God and others. In a sense, faith illuminates the pressing need for Christian charity and piety.

Not surprisingly, scholars preoccupied with devotional art from the Middle Ages have spilled a lot of ink on the relationship between sight and insight. Some scholars, such as Sixten Ringbom and Herbert Kessler have focused primarily on the differences between corporeal and spiritual vision, whereas Hans Belting and Jeffrey Hamburger have concentrated primarily on their similarities and occasional intermingling.[39] To my understanding, late medieval Christians were diverse enough to accommodate both views. Some may have considered devotional images as "real absences," as traces of the sacred, which remain infinite and invisible, while other believers may have viewed them as "real presences," visual manifestations or localizations of the divine. Faith, as noted in Saint Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians, is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. The question remains, however, how much of the sacred is currently apparent, how much of the divine a devotional image can show in the here and now.

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[38] Saint. Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, XXII, 1, trans. Henry Bettenson as *The City of God* (New York: Penguin, 1984), pp. 1022–23.

[39] Herbert Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing: Picturing God's Invisibility in Medieval Art* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), esp. pp. 104–48; Jeffery Hamburger, "Speculations on speculation: vision and perception in the theory and practice of mystical devotion, in *Deutsche Mystik im abendländischen Zusammenhang. Neu erschlossene Texte, neue methodische Ansätze, neue theoretische Konzepte. Kolloquium Kloster Fischingen, 1998*, eds. Walter Haug and Wolfram Schneider-Lastin (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 2000), pp. 353–408 and *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone, 1998), pp. 111–48; Hans Belting, *Kult und Bild. Eine Geschichte des Bildes vor dem Bildes vor dem Zeitalter der Kunst* (1990), trans. Edmund Jephcott as *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994); and Sixten Ringbom, "Devotional images and imaginative devotions: notes on the place of art in late medieval private piety," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 73, ser. 6 (1969), pp. 159–70.

In addition, although faith is preoccupied with that which is unseen, it is also a matter of demonstration, of bringing truth to light. Faith is something practiced; it is a virtue, a good habit, exemplifying Christian life. To be virtuous, acts of faith should not be done merely to be seen. If so, such acts would be hypocrisy. Nonetheless, faith should be performed in public for others to see, encouraging everyone present to trust God more fully.

Saints help others see the light. By definition, they are witnesses of the faith. They reveal ways to imitate Christ. One of the most popular female saints of the late middle ages and early Renaissance was Saint Lucy, whose name derives from *lux* or light.[40] In fifteenth-century Italian painting, she is frequently shown holding a set of eyeballs. For instance, around 1445, Domenico Veneziano represented her in the altarpiece for the Florentine church of Santa Lucia dei Magnoli grasping a palm of martyrdom with one hand as she carries her detached eyes on a golden plate. The remarkable use of natural light in this painting reinforces the close affinity between Lucy and light. She has also been shown extending the gift of her eyes as if they were petals of a flower.[41] Around 1473, Francesco del Cossa painted a panel for the Bolognese church of San Petronio. A wealthy merchant, Floriano Griffoni commissioned the work for his family chapel. The unusual flower-like presentation of Lucy's eyes is likely a play on the patron's name.[42] In most depictions of the saint, the amputated eyes look like albino olives or fried eggs arranged on a plate.

The removal of eyes is described in competing legends of the virgin saint. One version of the tale suggests that the Roman emperor Diocletian well noted for his persecution of Christians had Lucy's eyes gouged out. In another telling of the tale, Lucy plucked her own eyes out to stop a pagan suitor from lusting after her eyes, a deed that apparently converted him to the faith. Nonetheless, in both of these narratives, God miraculously restores her vision. Not surprisingly, Saint Lucy is a patron saint of the blind. Although she lost her corpo-

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[40] *The Golden Legend*, vol. 1, p. 27.

[41] For more on Domenico Veneziano, see Hellmut Wohl, *The Paintings of Domenico Veneziano: A Study in Florentine Art in the Early Renaissance* (New York: New York University, 1980).

[42] For more on Francesco del Cossa's painting of Saint Lucy, see Niklós Boskovits, David Alan Brown, et al., *Italian Paintings of the Fifteenth Century. The Systematic Catalogue of the National Gallery of Art* (Washington DC: National Gallery of Art, 2003), pp. 215–22.

ral sight, as a faithful servant of God, Lucy is able to see again. Blessed with fresh eyes, she never loses sight of the presence of the divine or fails to notice the substantial needs of others.

Saint Lucy often appears with four eyes in Italian art, but in Netherlandish imagery, she typically has only two. Rather than represent the plucked out eyes, Netherlandish examples depict the saint with a sword through her neck, as can be seen in numerous sculptures produced around 1500. In the Netherlands, images of Saint Lucy closely follow the hagiographical account of the *Golden Legend*, which makes no reference to the gouging out of her eyes.[43] Although sculptures of Saint Lucy are quite prevalent, there are few surviving panels representing her. In this essay, we will address one of these rare depictions (fig. 6.3).

Nearly one hundred years ago, Wilhelm Valentiner attributed an early Netherlandish painting of the martyrdom of Saint Lucy to the Master of the Figdor Deposition.[44] His work shares visual characteristics with that of Geertgen tot Sint Jans as well as Jacob Corneliszoon van Oostsanen (*c.* 1470–1533), encouraging Valentiner and other scholars to believe that the anonymous artist was active in Haarlem or Amsterdam around 1500. The Saint Lucy and Deposition panels, the former housed in the Rijksmuseum and the latter once part of the Figdor Collection destroyed in World War II, were initially two sides of the left shutter of a triptych.[45]

Although the lost interior panels likely included previous scenes of Christ's Passion, it is impossible to know what saint was represented on the missing exterior panel. The image adjacent to that showing the life and death of Saint Lucy may have depicted other episodes in the

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[43] *The Golden Legend*, vol 1, pp. 27–29.

[44] Wilhelm Valentiner, *Aus der niederlandischen Kunst* (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1914), p. 69.

[45] For more on the Amsterdam panel of the Master of Figdor Deposition, see Micha Leeflang's catalogue entry in *Vroege Hollanders: Schilderkunst van de late Middeleeuwen*, eds. Friso Lammertse and Jeroen Giltaij (Rotterdam: Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, 2008), pp. 192–95, nr. 30; Henk van Os, Jan Piet Filedt Kok, Ger Luijten and Frits Scholten, *Netherlandish Art in the Rijksmuseum, 1400–1600* (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 2000), pp. 74–76; Albert Châtelet, *Les Primitifs hollandaise. Le peinture dans les Pays-Bas du Nord au XV^e siècle* (1980), trans. Christopher Brown and Anthony Turner as *Early Dutch Painting: Painting in the Northern Netherlands in the Fifteenth Century* (Secaucus: Wellfleet, 1981), pp. 138–39; and Max Friedländer, *Die altniederländische Malerei* (1924–37), trans. Heinz Norden as *Early Netherlandish Painting*, vol. 5 (Leiden and New York: Praeger, 1967–76), pp. 33–34.

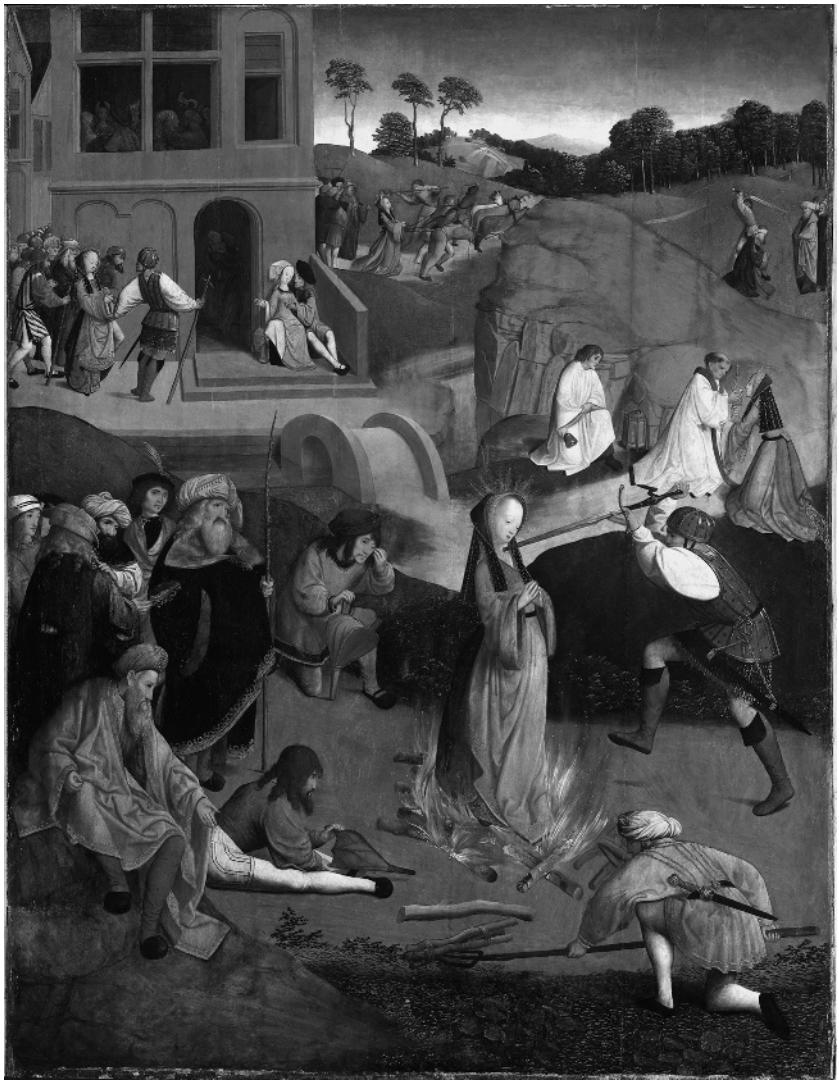

Fig. 6.3 Master of the Figdor Deposition, *The Martyrdom of Saint Lucy, c.* 1505, 132.4 × 101.7 cm, oil on panel, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. Photo by permission.

saint's life or offered a narrative of another saint. However, the scale of the surviving panels, measuring over 130 by 100 centimeters, and their apparent placement within a triptych format suggest that the paintings served as part of a large altarpiece. The triptych likely functioned as a liturgical aid, complementing celebration of the Eucharist. As an outer panel, the scenes of Saint Lucy would have helped prepare pious observers to witness the presence of the divine by showing them a miraculous life and gruesome martyrdom, given out of faithfulness to God, who can graciously provide forgiveness. In other words, the exterior shutter would have invited viewers to anticipate God's mercy, which was represented in the interior scenes of Christ's sacrifice as well as in the Elevation of the Host, which occurred directly in front of the opened altarpiece. The panel of Saint Lucy may have also encouraged beholders to give of themselves more fully.

Unfortunately, the provenance of these images cannot be traced back to a particular church or cloister. Nonetheless, as Henri Defoer has noted, the altarpiece was likely made for the only local building dedicated to the saint, a convent in Amsterdam. Today, the convent is no longer stands and Amsterdam's Historisch Museum is situated in its original location.[46]

The Master of the Figdor Deposition's painting of Saint Lucy closely parallels the account found in the *Golden Legend*. According to the text, Lucy was born and raised in Syracuse during the late third century. Her father, a Roman nobleman, died at an early age, leaving Lucy's ailing mother Euthicia to care for his daughter's well being. In search of a miraculous cure for her mother, who suffered from an unstoppable hemorrhage, Lucy persuaded Euthicia to join her on a pilgrimage to see the relics of Saint Agatha, located in Catania, nearly fifty miles away. At the church, the two women listened a sermon on Christ healing the woman diseased with the issue of blood. Upon hearing these words, Lucy asked her mother to place her hand on Agatha's tomb and miraculously Euthicia's bleeding ended. In response to this gift, the women gave much of their riches to the poor.[47]

Upon discovering that Lucy had given away her dowry, her disgruntled fiancé, a man to whom Lucy had been unwillingly engaged,

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[46] Henri Defoer, "De marteldood van de H. Lucia door de Meester van de Kruisafneming uit de Verzameling Figdor," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 46 (1998), pp. 264–74, 348–49.

[47] *The Golden Legend*, vol. 1, pp. 27–28.

informed authorities that she was a Christian and that she refused to make sacrifices to Roman gods. He brought Lucy before the Roman consul Paschasius for questioning. Frustrated by her persistent claims of submission to God and her failure to heed his directive to participate in the imperial cult, Paschasius sentenced Lucy to death. At the close of her trial, the consul addressed the accused, but this did not stop Lucy from speaking out. As described in the *Golden Legend*:

> "You have squandered your patrimony with seducers, and so you talk like a whore"; but Lucy replied, "As for my patrimony, I have put it in a safe place, and never have had anything to do with any seducers of the body or of the mind." Paschasius: "Who are these seducers of the body and the mind?" Lucy: "You and those like you are seducers of the mind, because you induce souls to turn away from their Creator. As for the seducers of the body, they are those who would have us put the pleasures of the flesh ahead of eternal joys.
>
> This moved Paschasius to say: "The sting of the whip will silence your lip!" Lucy: "The words of God cannot be stilled!" Paschasius: "So you are God?" Lucy: "I am the handmaid of God, who said to his disciples, 'You shall be brought before governors and before kings for my sake, but when they shall deliver you up, take no thought how or what to say, for it is not you that speaks, but the Holy Spirit that speaks in you.'" Paschasius: "So the Holy Spirit is in you?" Lucy: "Those who live chaste lives are the temples of the Holy Spirit." "Then I shall have you taken to a brothel," said Paschasius, "your body will be defiled and you will lose the Holy Spirit." "The body is not defiled," Lucy responded, "unless the mind consents. If you have me ravished against my will, my chastity will be doubled and the crown will be mine. You will never be able to force my will. As for my body, here it is, ready for every torture. What are you waiting for? Son of the devil, begin! Carry out your cruel designs!"[48]

Although none of these events, from her visit to Saint Agatha's tomb to her trial before Paschasius, are represented in the painting, they serve as an important backdrop.

To punish the insolent Lucy, Paschasius forces her into prostitution. He invites local pimps to gather a crowd of clients, encouraging them to abuse her sexually until she is dead. The Roman consul's order, however, could not be completed. Miraculously, Lucy could not be moved. The Holy Spirit kept his men from carrying her off to the brothel. In response, Paschasius sends a thousand soldiers to move her, but Lucy remains steadfast. This episode is represented in the

[48] *The Golden Legend*, vol. 1, p. 28.

painting. Lucy firmly stands in front of a brothel, filled with windows and door revealing shady commercial and sexual activities.

Although the painted scene draws attention to her unshakeable faith, it also indicates her status as "the way of light." According to the *Golden Legend*, light remains pristine, even when its beams illuminate unclean places. Like light, Lucy appears uncorrupted by her setting. The saint remains pure in color and in geometric form, indicating her chastity. Her virtue is reinforced by antithesis. To the right, a seated prostitute accepts a customer's groping of her breasts, as her open hand guides her client towards the bordello's open door. Both women appear passive, but Lucy's prayerful gesture indicates that her willingness is based on love for God rather than lust for money. In the likely case that this panel was indeed commissioned as part of an altarpiece for an Amsterdam convent, Lucy's capacity to maintain sexual innocence would have also held special significance for local nuns, especially for those struggling to remain chaste.

The next episode in Lucy's life is represented to the right of the brothel. Paschasius has sent a thousand oxen to move Lucy. Nonetheless, once again she cannot be budged. Although the number of oxen in the painting has been reduced to three, the vignette depicts two scenes of the narrative simultaneously. Behind the oxen, a sorcerer places a magical wand over the saint, as he unsuccessfully casts a spell to overcome her immobility.

Nothing seems to work for the Roman consul. He has boiling hot oil poured over her body and has her placed on a pyre. The saint can be seen standing upon these flames in the foreground of the painting, while Paschasius's henchmen gather additional wood and use bellows to fuel the fire. Some members of the governor's entourage wear elaborate costumes and exotic turbans, frequently associated with Saracens, reinforcing their status as enemies of the Church. Yet, once again her torture is ineffective. Near the center of the panel, a crouching figure leans upon his bellows. The position of his left hand suggests that he may be wiping way tears or sweat, likely wishing that his work would come to an end. Although Lucy is not dressed in military garb, she wears the armor of God. The saint is able to withstand horrific torture because she carries the shield of faith, described in Ephesians 6, protecting her from the flaming darts of the evil one. Exasperated, one of the consul's friends plunges his sword into her throat. Nonetheless, according to legend, the saint miraculously maintained her ability to speak, announcing the triumph of the church and Diocletian's abdication of his throne.

As she spoke, a Roman envoy arrested Paschasius for pillaging the province. For his crimes, the consul was sentenced to death. On the upper right of the panel, Paschasius is shown being decapitated. The inclusion of this scene is significant. Like the miraculous story of Saint Lucy, it calls attention to divine intervention. The consul's execution guarantees that justice will prevail. No wrong deed will go unpunished. For late medieval Christians, the vignette may have provided comfort in God's providence.

Paschasius's death also provides a telling antithesis to Lucy. Although Paschasius and Lucy are executed in similar ways, he is seated and blindfolded. Seduced by earthly treasure, Paschasius lacks the strength of faith. By contrast, the upright figure of Lucy, who incidentally is also the patron-saint of those who suffer from sore throats, can endure her execution without pain and without fear, for she is already one with God. By divine intervention, she is able to remain calm throughout her elongated ordeal.

Before receiving her martyrdom, however, Lucy is offered last rites. Although the legend states that she was given final communion from the very spot where the immoveable witness of the faith drew her last breath, in the painting she receives last rites in a different location, on the right side of the middle ground. Accompanied by a bell ringer, a white clad priest extends the body and blood of Christ to the saint just before her impending death. The association between the sacrament of last rites and Lucy's martyrdom reinforces the saint's imitation of Christ's sacrifice and by extension, encourages beholders to consider the strength of God's grace as they strive to live more faithfully. Lucy provides an ideal model of devotion for viewers to follow, for she has placed herself at the disposal of others so that Christian love can endure. Nonetheless, her story as well as her appearance in the panel paradoxically indicates that complete conformity with Christ is an impossible imperative to satisfy. As a handmaid of the Lord, the virgin-saint may show others how to be a loyal servant, but she is not divine and does not possess the power of forgiveness. The uniqueness of Christ makes it impossible to represent him faithfully. No one, not even Lucy, can replace him. However, the imitation of Christ remains an obligation, even though it cannot be fulfilled.[49]

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[49] F.O. Büttner, *Imitatio pietatis: Motiv der christlichen Ikonographie als Modelle zur Verähnlichung* (Berlin: Mann, 1983).

Hagiography is not simply narration; it is written to make religious points. Like the account presented in the *Golden Legend*, this Netherlandish painting promotes devotional practices. Throughout the panel, Lucy is shown to be steadfast, unshakeable in her faith. Yet, she appears in multiple vignettes within the painting producing a "where's Waldo" response from the viewer. In other words, although her tale is one of physical immobility, the painting, like the Geertgen panels discussed earlier, invites an active surveillance of its content. Beholders are encouraged to move their eyes and their hearts not only in an effort to find the saint and comfort in miraculous power, but also to discover ways to prepare themselves to receive the divine inspiration that they hoped would soon arrive. Although the painting includes multiple representation of physical immobility, it may have called viewers to anticipate being moved by the Holy Spirit.

The Master of the Figdor Deposition's painting of Saint Lucy was not produced at a time when northern Europeans had to defend Christianity in their hometowns. Crusaders and missionaries to foreign lands may have put their lives at risk, but orthodox believers had little opportunity to die for the faith at home. As Richard Kieckhefer puts it, "the quest for martyrdom was essentially a pious dream."[50] But this did not discourage the devout from such longings. Their desires intensified as the possibilities of fulfilling them diminished. In his excellent book, *Salvation at Stake*, Brad Gregory reminds readers that believers faced a similar problem when the Roman Empire embraced the Christian faith under Constantine. To solve this apparent crisis, Jerome and Augustine advocated "white" or spiritual martyrdom, whereby self-denial through asceticism substituted for death at the hands of Christ's enemies.[51] Another of the Church Fathers, Pope Gregory affirmed the practice of spiritual martyrdom a century later. In his words, "If, with the help of the Lord, we strive to observe the virtue of patience, even though we live in the peace of the Church, nevertheless we bear the palm of martyrdom."[52] Late medieval Christians renewed the promotion of self-renunciation as a means of imitating Christ and the saints.

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[50] Richard Kieckhefer, *Unquiet Souls: Fourteenth-Century Saints and Their Religious Milieu* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 67.

[51] Brad Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 30–73.

[52] Saint Gregory the Great, *Homiliae in evangelia*, 2.35.7, cited in Alfred Rush, "Spiritual Martyrdom in St Gregory the Great," *Theological Studies* 23 (1962), p. 580.

In addition, monastic life and celibacy were often described in terms of self-denial, as sacrifices made for the good of the Church. Like her martyrdom, Lucy's virginity was considered a way of giving up her self, out of compassion for God and others.

Throughout the panel, Lucy is shown in the act of prayer. Although prayer is not typically associated with martyrdom, it can be a kenotic gesture.[53] In heartfelt prayer, one empties oneself before the divine. Deferring selfish pretension, such petitions expose the now vulnerable supplicant to the invisible God, begging the Holy Spirit to arrive. Such prayers marginalize the self by putting God and others first. Saint Lucy provides a model for viewers to imitate. Her prayers seem to ask that the will of God be done. They appear to entreat God to help her surrender more fully. These prayerful scenes invite beholders to entrust themselves to God and remain faithfully committed to following his authority. In addition, late medieval Christians frequently addressed saints, such as Lucy, as intercessors to their prayers. Unprepared to plead before God sufficiently, penitent supplicants often asked saints, who are filled with the Holy Spirit, to speak on their behalf. Seeing Lucy in the act of prayer may have encouraged viewers to imitate her example as it reminded them of her ability to serve as an effective mediator to the divine.

Even though no one, according to Romans 8, knows how to pray, faithful believers are called to pray without ceasing. The gift of the Holy Spirit will help those who, like Saint Lucy, pray from the heart. As Saint Augustine put it, prayer does not tell God anything that God does not already know.[54] Although it does not educate the addressee, prayer teaches the sender. Prayer reminds supplicants of the need of salvation and awakens them to obey God. Renewed by the Holy Spirit, the prayerful are pushed to greater devotion. Saint Lucy may appear steadfast in her faith, but that is only made possible because the Holy Spirit has already moved her. Paradoxically, one cannot ask for the Holy Spirit to accept one's hospitality, unless the Spirit is already present, making such a demand of its host. Lucy may stand

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[53] Jean-Louis Chrétien, "La parole blessé: phenomenology de la prière," in *Phénoménologie et théologie*, ed. Jean-François Courtine (1992), trans. Jeffrey Kosky and Thomas Carlson as "The Wounded Word: Phenomenology of Prayer," in Dominique Janicaud et al., *Phenomenology and the "Theological Turn." The French Debate* (New York: Fordham University Press), pp. 147–75.

[54] *The Confessions*, I, 1–2, p. 17–18.

firm, unswerving in her commitments. Yet, the Spirit runs through her, making such devotion possible. Faith can move mountains, but as this painting of Saint Lucy indicates, it can also keep believers from faltering. Witnessing multiple images of the saint in prayer may have encouraged viewers to pray continually, begging persistently for the Holy Spirit, who is already there, to enter their hearts.

The Master of the Figdor Deposition's panel of Saint Lucy indicates that faith is more than simply a matter of seeing the invisible; it also includes the dynamics of standing still. As stationary observers study this painting, their eyes travel across the panel in pursuit of a saint, who though immobile, moves from one scene to the next. The painting provides an imaginative spark, calling pious beholders to remain steadfast in their commitments, as they increasingly shift their attention away from material towards more spiritual concerns. The panel invites viewers to walk in faith, as they constantly implore the Holy Spirit to come into their hearts, even though this request has been granted prior to the asking.

In conclusion, the visual narratives depicted in the Edinburgh-Rotterdam diptych and the Amsterdam *Martyrdom of Saint Lucy* are not mapped out in a strictly linear fashion. They are not merely arranged according to the chronology of verbal texts. Nor do they simply follow the path of actual pilgrimage routes. On the contrary, these images demand a more active perusal. Viewers are encouraged to discover paths they can call their own. By pausing in front of paintings such as these, observers are not only presented with opportunities to see distant places, they are also given chances to look within themselves, to see within their hearts.

Turning vision inward fosters self-consciousness. It exposes the need for repentance and helps the pious discover how to walk with God, even when they stand still. Pious beholders are reminded to be more steadfast in their faith and learn how better to walk with God, for their final destination has yet to be reached. Presumably moved by the Holy Spirit, who is believed to be there but remains unseen, the stationary devout are encouraged to travel imaginatively to holy places and meditate on saintly deeds in preparation for making their hearts into sacred sites where the divine may appear and make its presence known.

7. PILGRIMAGE THROUGH THE PAGES: PILGRIMS' BADGES IN LATE MEDIEVAL DEVOTIONAL MANUSCRIPTS*

Megan H. Foster-Campbell

In the late Middle Ages, the increasing secular demand for personal prayer books, particularly books of hours, exemplified the rising interest in individual control of everyday spiritual life through private prayer. Concurrently, pilgrimage to popular holy shrines peaked in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. To remember their visits, pilgrims often purchased small, inexpensive souvenirs—usually thin, metal badges—which were manufactured and sold near pilgrimage churches.[1] While these souvenirs were frequently worn on clothing, hats, or bags, pilgrims began sewing their badges within the pages of their prayer books by the second half of fifteenth century.[2] This practice became popular in the Southern Netherlands and Northern France around 1460–70, reaching its peak during the early decades of the sixteenth century.[3]

The sewing of pilgrims' badges into devotional manuscripts likely led to painted representations of pilgrims' souvenirs found in the margins of illuminated Flemish manuscripts in the late fifteenth and early

* This article is based on research stemming from several chapters of my dissertation. I would like to thank my advisor, Anne D. Hedeman, for her unwavering support of this project, as well as her helpful suggestions of an early draft of this essay. I am also indebted to Sarah Blick and Laura Gelfand for their insightful comments and critiques, as well as Michael Foster for his sharp editorial eye.

[1] These metal souvenirs were most often made of inexpensive materials, such as lead, tin, or an alloy of the two. Pilgrims' badges could also be made of more precious metals, such as brass, bronze, silver-gilt, silver, or gold. Souvenirs could also be made of paper, vellum, leather, or cloth.

[2] Here, the term "prayer book" is used to mean a manuscript used for private devotional purposes; the most common of these in the context of this essay are books of hours. The terms "badge" and "souvenir" are used interchangeably in this essay.

[3] Although most popular in these geographic areas, evidence of sewing badges into manuscripts stretches south into parts of central and eastern France and into the northern regions of the Netherlands.

Besides these wafer-thin, bracteate metal pilgrims' badges, other devotional souvenirs, such as prints, were also affixed into devotional manuscripts (either sewn or pasted onto the page). This essay's primary focus will be on the metal badges, with the exception of Holy Face pilgrim souvenirs, usually made of vellum, cloth, or paper.

sixteenth centuries. First appearing in books produced in the workshops of Ghent and Bruges around the early 1480s, painted pilgrims' badges became a popular motif within two decades, often appearing within a manuscript's larger cycle of panel or strewn border decoration. These borders, which also incorporated flowers, fruit, insects, jewels, and acanthus patterns, are admired primarily for their aesthetic value. Painted with high detail, they often were represented with three-dimensional illusionism, appearing to cast shadows in a *trompe l'oeil* effect. With gold and silver coloring, sizing, and iconography comparable to their real counterparts, painted badges were even depicted with stitched threads along their edges, further adding to their realism.

Based on holdings in public archives as well as private collections, over fifty-five extant manuscripts contain (or once contained) real badges, and at least forty-eight manuscripts contained painted marginal representations of badges.[4] Additional manuscripts which once held pilgrims' badges, evident by the visible offsets and small needle holes on the folio, are continually being discovered. What was once ignored or dismissed in these manuscripts as an incidental occurrence, a minor codicological detail, or an inconsequential iconographic motif now appears to have been a larger phenomenon in this region of Europe in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth century. Moreover, the occurrence of real or painted badges in manuscripts provides insights about how the faithful approached the experience of pilgrimage *vis-à-vis* their quotidian devotional life, which often included the regular

[4] Preliminary inventories of manuscripts with badges drawn up by the pilgrim badge scholar Kurt Köster originally cited twenty-five manuscripts with either real or representational badges. See "Religiöse Medaillen und Wallfahrts-Devotionalien in der Flamischen Buchmalerei des 15. Und Fruhen 16. Jahrhunderts," in *Buch and Welt* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1965), pp. 459–504; "Kollektionen Metallener Wallfahrts-Devotionalien und Kleiner Andachtsbilder, Eingenäht in Spätmittelalterliche Gebetbuch-Handschriften," in ed. B. Haller, *Das Buch und Sein Haus: Erlesenes aus der Welt des Buches* (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1979), pp. 87–95; "Gemalte Kollektionen von Pilgerzeichen und Religiösen Medaillen in Flämischen Gebet- und Stundenbüchern des 15. und Frühen 16. Jahrhunderts," in *Liber Amicorum Herman Liebaers* (Brussels: Crédit Communal de Belgique, 1984), pp. 485–535. Addenda to these lists have been offered by Jos Koldeweij, "Pilgrim Badges Painted in Manuscripts: A North Netherlandish Example," in eds. Koert van der Horst and Johann-Christian Klamt, *Masters and Miniatures: Proceedings of the Congress on Medieval Manuscript Illumination in the Northern Netherlands* (Doornspijk, 1991), pp. 211–18; and Denis Bruna, "Temoins de Dévotions dans les Livres d'Heures a la Fin du Moyen Age," in *Revue Mabillon* 9:70 (1998): 127–61; and the pilgrim badge database Kunera, based at the Raboud Universiteit, Nijmegen, http://www.kunera.nl/ (accessed 2006–2009).

use of prayer books. Specifically, badges in prayer books shed light on how their owners continued to personally interact with and respond to pilgrim badges beyond the pilgrimage roads, and after the completion of a pilgrimage.

Much scholarship on pilgrim badges, including those contained in manuscripts, has focused on the important task of identifying pilgrimage sites depicted in badges. Only recently has attention been given to the functional and metaphorical meaning of pilgrim badges in manuscripts.[5] This essay investigates how the melding of these two types of devotional objects—the prayer book and the real or fictive pilgrim badge—created a more complex devotional experience for the owner. It considers the significance of these objects as an aid for personal devotion beyond the temporal and physical experience of a pilgrimage journey, and their use in daily prayer life as exhibited in prayer books. Specifically, it explores how the inclusion of pilgrim badges—either real or representational—in prayer books facilitated forms of a mental or virtual pilgrimage for the book owner, whether through memory or imagination.[6] This study also examines how pilgrims' badges (both actual and painted) served a mnemonic purpose, as a

[5] Among other publications, see Denis Bruna, "Temoins," particularly pp. 133–40; Bruna, *Enseignes de Pèlerinage et Enseignes Profanes* (Paris: Réunion des musées nationaux, 1996), esp. pp. 16–18; Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann and Virginia Roehrig Kaufmann, "The Sanctification of Nature: Observations on the Origins of Trompe l'Oeil in Netherlandish Book Painting of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," *Journal of the J. Paul Getty Museum* 19 (1991), pp. 43–64; A.M. (Jos) Koldeweij, "Lifting the Veil on Pilgrim Badges," in ed. J. Stopford, *Pilgrimage Explored* (Suffolk, 1999), pp. 161–88; Koldeweij, "The Wearing of Significative Badges, Religious and Secular: The Social Meaning of a Behavioural Pattern," in eds. Wim Blockmans and Antheun Janse, *Showing Status: Representation of Social Positions in the Late Middle Ages* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), pp. 309–28.

[6] The notion of "mental" or "virtual" pilgrimage has been explored by Kathryn M. Rudy in her dissertation "Northern European Visual Responses to Holy Land Pilgrimage, 1453–1550" (Columbia University, 2000), specifically pp. 59–129, as well as her subsequent publications, including "A Pilgrim's Book of hours: Stockholm Royal Library A233," *Studies in Iconography* 21, (2000), pp. 237–77; "Den aflaet der heiliger stat Jherusalem ende des berchs van Calvarien. Indulgenced Prayers for Mental Holy Land Pilgrimage in Manuscripts from the St. Agnes Convent in Maaseik," *Ons Gesstelijk Erf* 74 (2000), pp. 211–54; and "A Guide to Mental Pilgrimage: Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Ms. 212," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 63/4 (2000), pp. 494–515. It has also been suggested in reference to Early Christian souvenirs by Sheila D. Campbell, in "Armchair Pilgrims: Ampullae from Aphrodisias in Caria," *Mediaeval Studies* 50 (1988), pp. 539–45. See also Ursula Weekes, *Early Engravers and Their Public: The Master of the Berlin Passion and Manuscripts from Convents in the Rhine-Maas Region* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), pp. 182–85.

device of pilgrimage that evoked a devotional memory and a constant reminder of the pilgrimage experience whenever the book was opened. I will first look at two manuscripts with extant badges still sewn onto their pages and discuss how the regular use of the book in daily prayer life allowed the reader to revisit the badges and recall a journey to specific holy sites.[7] In both codices, the placement of badges in books, and their relation to adjacent prayers and other images contained within the manuscript, likely influenced the owner's reliving and remembering of the pilgrimage journey in different ways. Manuscripts with painted badges in their margins may be interpreted as tokens of pilgrimage for the viewer who may have never voyaged on an actual pilgrimage. In these instances, the viewing or reading of badges could provide a surrogate mental pilgrimage, substituting for a physical journey not taken, or one that was meant to be taken. This melding of memory or mental pilgrimage (either an actual voyage or one never fulfilled), triggered by the reader's repeated interaction with badges in manuscripts, is the focus of this essay.

From Shrine to Cloak to Page

As a mass-produced item, the pilgrim badge was something that could be purchased by any pilgrim.[8] When pinned to a cloak, hat, or bag, a pilgrim souvenir would be seen by everyone the pilgrim encountered and thus could serve several identifying functions when worn

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[7] The manuscripts chosen for detailed analyses in this paper are some of the few which still hold badges, as many codices have lost their souvenirs.

[8] The focus of this essay primarily rests on metal pilgrims' badges. However, other devotional objects acquired on pilgrimage, such as devotional prints, were added to manuscripts in order to heighten and personalize the prayer experience. See Jeffrey Hamburger, *Nuns as Artists: The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), esp. pp. 192–98; Weekes, *Early Engravers and Their Public: The Master of the Berlin Passion and Manuscripts from Convents in the Rhine-Maas Region*, particularly part II; Eamon Duffy, *Marking the Hours: English People and their Prayers 1240–1570* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), esp. pp. 38–42; Hanneke van Asperen, "Praying, Threading, and Adorning: Sewn-in Prints in a Rosary Prayer Book (London, British Library, Add. MS 14042)," in eds. Kathryn M. Rudy and Barbara Baert, *Weaving, Veiling, and Dressing: Textiles and their Metaphors in the Late Middle Ages*, Medieval Church Studies, vol. 12 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp. 81–120. Sewn objects such as embroideries are also found in the pages of manuscripts. A famous example, which also contains pilgrims' badges, can be found in Paris's Bibliothèque Arsenal (MS 1176A rés). On fol. Av, a badge of St. Martha of Tarascon and a Vera Icon souvenir surround a square embroidery depicting the instruments of Christ's Passion.

in public. On the one hand, they singled out the wearers as pilgrims, providing them with rights and amenities as they traveled. Further, they visually signified the accomplishment of a pilgrimage, advertising which sites and shrines the pilgrim visited and how far the pilgrim traveled. The specific iconography of the badges also helped to connect pilgrims to particular saints.[9]

Pilgrim badges also could acquire sanctification from the saint's shrine, and pilgrims sought the blessing and protection of specific saints and shrines by visiting them. These badges were in close proximity or perhaps even direct contact with the holy shrine, often by being touched or pressed against the shrine to imbue them with miraculous powers, in effect making the badge a contact relic.[10] When worn by a pilgrim, the souvenir could serve a talismanic or apotropaic function, capable of warding off evil and protecting the individual from harm. Indeed, the pilgrims' practice of pinning badges to their clothing suggests the concern for a safe return journey from the holy site.[11] Badges imbued with apotropaic powers were subsequently used to cure ailments or illnesses, either for their owner or for relatives who could not undertake the pilgrimage journey. Some were dipped in liquid that was either consumed or applied to the body. Badges could be placed inside houses or near livestock for safeguarding, or cast in bells in order to ring out the badges' apotropaic properties and deter evil.[12]

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[9] Koldeweij, "Lifting the Veil," p. 161; Jennifer M. Lee, "Beyond the *Locus Sanctus*: The Independent Iconography of Pilgrims' Souvenirs," *Visual Resources* 21/4 (December 2005), p. 364.

[10] Jonathan Sumption, *The Age of Pilgrimage: The Medieval Journey to God* (New York: Hidden Spring, 2003), p. 249; Brian Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges* (London, 1998) pp. 16–17; Bruna, *Enseignes de Pèlerinage et Enseignes Profanes*, pp. 16–17; David Freedburg, *The Power of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 112, 128–35. An instance of this occurring is documented at Notre-Dame du Puy in France; see Esther Cohen, "*In haec signa*: Pilgrim-badge trade in Southern France," *Journal of Medieval History* 2/3 (1976), p. 213 n. 29.

[11] Besides multiple depictions of pilgrims wearing badges in fifteenth-century paintings, other examples of pilgrim's clothing include a cloak and badge-and-shell-filled hat (now in the Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, Germany) of a pilgrim named Stephen III Praun. See Anja Grebe, "Pilgrims and Fashion: The Functions of Pilgrims' Garments," in eds. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe, *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill Academic Press, 2005), pp. 3–27. A hat, cloak, and staff with a scallop shell also have been found near Worcester, England; now seen at Worcester Cathedral, their former owner is dubbed the "Worcester Pilgrim."

[12] Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs*, p. 18. For more on pilgrims' badges that were cast in bells, see Kurt Köster, "Mittelalterliche Pilgerzeichen," in eds. L. Kriss-Rettenbeck and G. Möhler, *Wallfahrt kennt keine Grenzen* (1984), pp. 203–223; Elly van Loon-van

How do these key functions of pilgrim badges—as an outwardly displayed sign of an undertaken pilgrimage and as a carrier of sanctity that had been transferred upon it—change or remain the same when placed in a prayer book? Ultimately, the badges placed in private prayer books may have had different meanings and resonated differently than those worn by pilgrims, although some functions invariably overlapped.

The placement of pilgrims' badges in prayer books indicates that multiple forms of private devotion were increasingly significant in the religious lives of the late medieval laity.[13] An individual was not only seeking a private prayer experience by reading a book of hours, but also an individual response within the larger mass experience of pilgrimage. In both cases, the private use of images within small-format devotional objects is integral. Placing badges within a prayer book combined aspects of a devotee's private religious experiences: one object—the book—was used daily, and the other—the badge—was a memento from an extraordinary occurrence. Adding a souvenir of a special event to a frequently-used object allowed the former to be accessible on a more quotidian level. As Brian Spencer remarks, "…the stitching of badges into prayer books underlines the devotion with which even the most sophisticated pilgrims regarded their souvenirs."[14]

The talismanic or apotropaic function of badges worn by the pilgrim on the journey also could be transferred to the manuscript when the souvenir was sewn within its pages. Ursula Weekes notes, "one of the chief motives for attaching pilgrim badges…to manuscripts was the notion that in so doing the owner of the book could appropriate the spiritual blessings of an external context such as the pilgrim shrine."[15] While the pilgrims' practice of pinning badges to their clothing suggests

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de Moosdijk, "Pelgrimsinsignes op 'Nederlandse' Klokken," in H.J.E. Van Beuningen, A.M. Koldeweij, and D. Kicken. *Heilig en Profaan 2: 1200 Laatmiddeleeuwse Insignes uit openbare en particuliere collecties (Rotterdam Papers 12)*. (Cothen: Stichting Middeleeuwse Religieuze en Profane Insignes, 2001), pp. 112–27; and Jörg Poettgen, "Pilgerzeichen auf Glocken," in *Heilig en Profaan 2*, pp. 128–36, among other publications.

[13] Another means of devotional interaction for the viewer was through the use of small textile curtains sewn over manuscript illuminations. These protective curtains would shield the images, requiring the reader to unveil and rediscover them as the text was read. See Christine Sciacca, "Raising the Curtain on the Use of Textiles in Manuscripts," in *Weaving, Veiling, and Dressing*, pp. 161–90.

[14] Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges*, p. 20.

[15] Weekes, p. 182.

the concern for a safe return journey from the holy site, the sewing of badges into a manuscript suggests that the book's contents were valuable and needing the protection of apotropaic objects.[16] Thus badges in manuscripts not only served devotional needs, but they also assumed the role of a talisman.[17] Furthermore, the badges' function as a contact relic made the book a receptacle for holding these relics—in effect, the codex becomes, as Mary Carruthers described, a reliquary or shrine.[18]

Analogously, certain pilgrims' badges may relate to the practice of acquiring indulgences. Earning indulgences was a significant reason for many to undertake a pilgrimage, and visiting specific shrines, particularly during a Jubilee Year or by papal decree, could earn the pilgrim a substantial indulgence. Pilgrims traveling to visit important churches in Rome, for example, could gain an indulgence of several thousand years to lessen their time in Purgatory; those traveling to the Holy Land could acquire one or more plenary indulgences.[19]

Even more compelling is the pilgrim badge's possible correlation with indulgenced prayers and images, the most noteworthy being the Vera Icon (also known as the Holy Face, Veronica's Veil, or the vernicle). Many late medieval books of hours contained a prayer to the Holy Face, often accompanied by a miniature of Veronica holding the veil imprinted with Christ's face, or simply an image of Christ's face. This prayer gained widespread popularity thanks to a papal indulgence obtained after saying the prayer and viewing and meditating

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[16] Lucy Freeman Sandler, "The Study of Marginal Imagery: Past, Present, and Future," *Studies in Iconography* 18 (1997), p. 36.

[17] Bruna, "Temoins," p. 137. Eamon Duffy notes that certain types of prayers often added to books of hours included devotions and prayers intended to fend off evil or bring about material good, which he labels "apotropaic charms." *Marking the Hours*, pp. 90–96. In the same way, the badges could be used as a further tool to ward off evil and protect the owner, perhaps in conjunction with these apotropaic prayers.

[18] Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 246.

[19] Rudy, "A Guide to Mental Pilgrimage: Paris, Bibliothèque de L'Arsenal Ms. 212," p. 494. Rudy examines a manuscript containing representations of pilgrimage sites in Rome and the Holy Land, with lists of indulgences for visiting them through substitute, or virtual means. Indulgences could also be acquired for lesser-known pilgrimages. For example, Margaret of York, the wife of the Burgundian Duke Charles the Bold, earned indulgences after going on pilgrimage to Aachen in 1475, which had been declared a Jubilee Year by the Pope. Harry Schnitker, "Margaret of York on Pilgrimage: The Exercise of Devotion and the Religious Traditions of the House of York," in eds. Douglas L. Biggs, Sharon D. Michalove, and A. Compton Reeves, *Reputation and Representation in Fifteenth-Century Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 103–105, 122.

upon the image. Pilgrims who traveled to see this relic in Rome would purchase a small cloth, parchment, or metal badge depicting the Holy Face.[20] Similar to other metal pilgrims' souvenirs, Vera Icon badges were pasted in several manuscripts.[21] Meditating on the Vera Icon badge while reciting the *Salve Sancta Facies*, the Prayer to the Holy Face, would shave several thousand years off of time to be served in Purgatory. The Holy Face soon appeared as a popular painted badge in manuscript margins.[22] As Jeffrey Hamburger observes, this exceptionally close relationship between the Holy Face relic, its pilgrimage site, its pilgrim souvenir, and its indulgence was often manifested in devotional manuscripts and could provide the owner an opportunity to perform a mental, or "proxy" pilgrimage.[23]

Thus, pilgrim badges stored in prayer books combined two key means of receiving indulgences: the pilgrimage journey and the use of particular indulgenced prayers and images in the codex. A pilgrim badge served as material proof of the pilgrimage taken and a reminder of the indulgence bestowed upon the individual for visiting the holy site. When combined with indulgenced prayers and images in the book, the souvenir provided great spiritual efficacy, helping the devotee reduce time in Purgatory. By gazing upon (and perhaps even touching and kissing) the badge and its image, recalling the pilgrimage journey to the holy shrine, praying to the particular saint, and reciting

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[20] Veronicas were also distributed at other religious sites in Western Europe, such as in Weinhausen, Germany; thus, it cannot be assumed that all extant vernicles originated in Rome.

[21] The most notable example of a manuscript with Vera Icon badges is a portion of the now-divided *Prayer Book of Philip the Bold* (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS 11035–37). On fol. 96r, four distinct Vera Icons have been sewn onto the folio; above these is a rubric for the Prayer to the Veronica. An additional Vera Icon appears on fol. 98r. This is not surprising, as the Burgundian ducal family maintained a strong devotion to the Holy Face. Affixed Vera Icon badges also can be seen in Paris, Bibliothèque Arsenal, MS 1176A rés, fol. Av; Utrecht, Rijksmuseum Het Catharijneconvent RMCC MS 1, fol. 1; Carpentras, Bibliotek Inguimbertine MS. 59 (*Hours of Antoine Bourdin*), fol. 110; Fritzlar, Dombibliothek, nr. 83, fol. 1v; Eichstätt, Diözesanarchiv Ordinariatsbibliothek MS 131 (*Pontifical-Missal of William of Reichenau*), fol. 107v; Copenhagen, Det Kongelige Biliothek, MS Thott 117, fol. iv; and a book of hours in Christie's Sale, June 3, 2009 (lot 13, sale 7725), fol. 13v.

[22] Kurt Köster originally calculated that at least twenty-eight painted representations of Vera Icon badges survive. "Gemalte Kollektionen," p. 525. The online pilgrim badge database Kunera only provides illustrations for approximately half of Köster's examples.

[23] Hamburger, *Nuns as Artists*, pp. 194–97, esp. p. 196. For more on indulgences and mental pilgrimage, see Rudy, "Den aflaet der heiliger stat Jherusalem ende des berchs van Calvarien: Indulgenced Prayers for Mental Holy Land Pilgrimage in Manuscripts from the St. Agnes Convent in Maaseik," pp. 211–54.

an indulgenced prayer, the reader employed a number of devotional devices to earn indulgences. In effect, it was a cumulative approach to prayerful indulgenced meditation in order to lessen one's time in Purgatory.

A manuscript's primary function as a written collection of prayers and devotions assumed additional roles with the inclusion of pilgrim souvenirs. On a practical level, the manuscript held badges for safe-keeping, as would a token box or bag, so that these precious souvenirs would not get lost. In turn, the badges became part of the book's fabric and an integral part of its structure.[24] These mass-produced, ephemeral objects were made more permanent and durable when sewn into the book; they became mementos that could be repeatedly used.[25]

A pilgrim badge's function as an outward sign publically identifying the pilgrim changed when it was housed in a prayer book. Instead, the pilgrim souvenir became associated with a more private viewing experience within the codex's pages, where only one or a few individuals saw it at one time. In effect, the book became the physical matrix in which the pilgrimage was privately re-experienced by the reader. However, the collection of badges also could be displayed to anyone the owner wished, as a testament to their faith. Thus, the book was the device for exhibiting, reviewing, and sharing the accomplishment

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[24] van Asperen, "Praying, Threading, and Adorning," p. 96.

[25] The degree of permanence of pilgrims' badges—whether they were meant to be kept for long-term use—is still under debate. Some scholars have suggested that pilgrims' badges were more disposable, as in "Summary" by Koldeweij in H.J.E. Van Beuningen and A.M. Koldeweij, *Heilig en Profaan: 1000 Laatmiddeleeuwse Insignes uit de Collectie H.J.E. van Beuningen (Rotterdam Papers 8)* (Cothen: Stichting Middeleeuwse Religieuze en Profane Insignes, 1993), pp. 324–326. In particular, the large numbers of badges found in riverbeds or buried near muddy river banks have led some scholars to suggest that badges may have assumed an *ex-voto* function, perhaps even to help the pilgrim re-integrate into normal society after the pilgrimage was completed. See Bruna, *Enseignes de Pèlerinage et Enseignes Profanes*, p. 15, and Michael Garcia, "Medieval Medicine, Magic, and Water: The dilemma of deliberate deposition of pilgrim signs," *Peregrinations: International Society for the Study of Pilgrimage Art* 1:3, http://peregrinations.kenyon.edu/vol1–3.pdf (accessed spring 2009). Jennifer M. Lee has further posited that the badge's primary amuletic function diminished after the pilgrimage was completed. Citing the large number of badges found in rivers and other bodies of water, as well as the prevalence of badges in organic construction backfill and rubbish, she argues that the "discarded material indicates the low intrinsic value ascribed to individual pilgrims' signs once they were no longer being worn", although she suggests that these badges could have been disposed as some sort of offering. "Searching for Signs: Pilgrims' Identity and Experience Made Visible in the *Miracula Sancti Thomae Cantuariensis*" in eds. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe, *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, p. 478.

of the pilgrimage journey with others. If the book accompanied the owner during the pilgrimage, the pilgrim could display his badge collection to other pilgrims along the route; the collection could also be shown to others upon the pilgrim's return. For descendants of the pilgrim's family who passed down the manuscript, the book's collection of badges was a reminder of the holy sites visited by their ancestor, and perhaps a model of pilgrim piety.

Not only could the physical journey of the pilgrimage be re-experienced, but also the psychological and emotional journey. The difficulties of travelling extended distances under arduous circumstances, as well as the elation which came with the fulfilment of each pilgrimage could be relived.[26] This small physical memento encapsulated the gamut of feelings that were part of the pilgrim's experience, including the strain of the lengthy, gruelling travel and the exhilaration of seeing, praying near, and perhaps even touching the saint's shrine.[27] In turn, the badges' imagery helped the pilgrim to envision the pilgrimage shrine and the sense of being in the presence of the saint. As Sarah Blick writes, "[the badge] offers a likeness of what the pilgrim witnessed, which in some way must capture the essence of what has been seen and experienced so that it can stir memory."[28] This immediate and intense emotion of experiencing the shrine and the saint made daily prayer more tangible and meaningful. Consequently, the badges provided an undercurrent of emotional immediacy during the routine reading and recitation of the book's prayers. By revisiting the souvenir

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[26] While numerous pilgrims traveled long distances to famous religious sites, by the late Middle Ages, many pilgrimage cults reflected strong popularity on a more local level. In *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (New York, St. Martin's Press, 1995), Ronald C. Finucane writes that pilgrims visiting most cults of English saints came from places less than 40 miles from the shrine (the primary exception being the cult of Thomas Becket). However, he goes on to state that while saints attracted the local devout and the start of their miracle-working careers, eventually more outside pilgrims were recorded visiting the site as local enthusiasm for the cult declined. pp. 169–71. See also "Introduction" in eds. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe, *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, p. xxi.

[27] Perhaps the most famous example of a pilgrim's documented emotion is in the *Book of Margery Kempe*, who describes being overcome with unremitting crying and sobbing while visiting pilgrimage sites in Jerusalem, the most famous incident occurring at the Tomb of Christ. *The Book of Margery Kempe*, trans. Lynn Staley (London: W.W. Norton and Company, Inc., 2001), pp. 49–54.

[28] Sarah Blick, "Exceptions to Krautheimer's Theory of Copying," in *Visual Resources* Vol. 20: 2–3 (June–September 2004), p. 133.

in the book and reliving the pilgrimage journey, an emotive element was added to daily prayer, helping to elevate the reader's devotional experience.

Inserting badges into books also provided a degree of personalization in a prayer book that may or may have not been produced specifically for the owner's personal spiritual needs. Most books of hours contained a standard set of Offices, prayers, and devotions with little variance, with accessory prayers added depending on the patron's wishes.[29] As books of hours increased in popularity and were produced in large numbers, production became more standardized, with codices written (or printed) and later supplemented with equally mass-produced sets of illustrations from workshops. The inserted pilgrims' badges were able to complement or enhance favorite devotions, similar to accessory prayers included in a book of hours. Habitually-used, favorite prayers or illuminations may have resonated with the patron prior to departing on pilgrimage and could later be accentuated by an adjacent badge.[30]

Congruently, the same personalization could be applied to mass-produced pilgrim souvenirs. Thousands of badges from a pilgrimage site were manufactured with similar material and iconography, yet each pilgrim layered their own devotional experience onto the purchased badge: the occurrences traveling to the shrine, the emotions felt, the prayers said at the site, and the spiritual closeness to the saint. As Blick suggests, "the souvenirs prompted memories that could be summoned again and again, recalling what they actually saw."[31] More than just identifying the bearer as a pilgrim, this small metal badge encapsulated the entire pilgrimage experience, one different from the thousands of other fellow pilgrims traveling to the same shrine.

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[29] These accessory texts often include a Calendar of Church Feasts; Excerpts from each of the four Gospels; the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary; the Seven Penitential Psalms; a Litany of the Saints; and the Office for the Dead. Other popular devotions were added such as the *Obsecro te* and *O Intemerata* (both prayers of entreaty to the Virgin); a set of four Gospel lessons; the Hours of the Cross, the Hours of the Holy Spirit; and Suffrages to Saints. The personalization of a books of hours with supplementary texts and personal details about the book's owner (coats of arms, entries of family births and deaths, even portraits) is discussed by Eamon Duffy in *Marking the Hours*, pp. 30–52.

[30] Evidence of habitually-used texts in a manuscript can be seen in the high amount of wear on those particular folios, and is often evident on pages that held pilgrims' badges. This is not always the case with folios with painted badges.

[31] Blick, "Exceptions to Krautheimer's Theory of Copying," p. 132.

Though the badges could serve as an exterior testament of one's faith when worn on clothing or a bag, they became more intimate and personal when placed within the manuscript's pages.[32]

Initially, a pilgrimage may not have been connected with the daily use of the prayer book's texts, but rather a separate devotional experience to be relived. Badges served as points of reference to what Weekes describes as "religious contexts outside of the book," encouraging the reader to use them to contemplate and meditate beyond the prayers' words within the book and to connect these prayers to other outside devotional experiences.[33] In many instances, the badge's iconography depicted the relic, shrine, or cult statue, reproducing characteristic elements of the objects of the pilgrim's devotion, reminding viewers of their visit to the shrine and what they saw there.[34] Still other badges represented a saint or an episode from the saint's life; pilgrims could then imagine themselves in the presence of that saint when they physically visited the shrine, as well as picturing the saint's hagiographic narrative.[35] Such images then could be coupled with specific prayers

[32] Bruna, "Temoines", p. 135.

[33] Weekes, p. 182.

[34] Examples include badges from the shrines of St. Thomas Becket, St. Denis, the Holy Rood at Aachen, the Virgin's Tunic at Chartres, Notre Dame at Halle, and St. Adrian of Geraardsbergen. See the pilgrim badge database Kunera (http://www.let.kun.nl/); as well as catalog entries in Bruna, *Enseignes de Pèlerinage et Enseignes Profanes*; H.J.E. Van Beuningen and A.M. Koldeweij, *Heilig en Profaan*; H.J.E. Van Beuningen, A.M. Koldeweij and D. Kicken, *Heilig en Profaan 2*; Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges.* Among the further analyses on particular pilgrims' badges depicting the saint's relics or shrine, see essays in eds. H.J.E. Van Beuningen, A.M. Koldeweij and D. Kicken, *Heilig en Profaan* as well as *Gevonden Voorwerpen: Opstellen over middeleeuwse archeologie*, (Rotterdam Papers nr. 11) (Rotterdam, 2000); Kurt Köster, "Pilgerzeichen und Wallfahrtsplaketten von St. Adrian in Geraardsbergen," in *Städel-Jahrbuch* (4:1973), pp. 103–20; *idem., Pilgerzeichen und Pilgermuscheln von mittelalterlichen Santiagostraßen* (Neumünster: Karl Wachholtz Verlag, 1983); Sarah Blick, "Reconstructing the Shrine of St. Thomas Becket, Canterbury Cathedral" in eds. Blick and Tekippe, *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe*, pp. 405–41; and Marike de Kroon, "Pilgrim Ampullae from Vendôme: Souvenirs from a Pilgrimage to the Holy Tear of Christ," *op. cit.*, pp. 443–72.

[35] Examples include badges from the shrines of St. Denis, St. Claude-in-the-Jura, St. Cornelius, John the Baptist at Amiens, The Three Kings at Cologne, and Mary Magdalene at St.-Maximian-La-Sainte-Baume. See the pilgrim badge database Kunera (http://www.let.kun.nl/); along with catalog entries in Bruna, *Enseignes de Pèlerinage et Enseignes Profanes; Heilig en Profaan;* Van Beuningen and Koldeweij, *Heilig en Profaan 2*, Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges.* Among the many analyses on badges depicting saints or saints' lives, see numerous essays in both *Heilig en Profaan* volumes as well as *Gevonden Voorwerpen: Opstellen over middeleeuwse archeologie*; Kurt Köster, *Pilgerzeichen und Pilgermuscheln von mittelalterlichen*

in the manuscript, such as saints' Suffrages, which recount the saint's life and seek intercession and help.[36] The badge's image provided a visual shortcut for the saint's life or martyrdom and a focal point of devotional entreaty and meditation.[37] By visiting these holy sites, the pilgrim achieved close physical proximity to these saints, and thus could achieve close spiritual proximity to them when reading about the saints in their prayer book.

In effect, the act of turning the pages of the prayer book containing pilgrims' becomes another form of pilgrimage. This unfolding of the journey in the book is similar to contemporary devotional pilgrimage texts which describe local details such as geography, churches and shrines at famed destinations such as the Holy Land; these descriptions encourage the reader to undertake a pilgrimage within one's mind.[38] The anticipation and the unveiling of the badges occurred

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Santiagostraßen; Jos Koldeweij, "Servatius in Veelvoud en Enkelvoud Maastrichtse Boekbanden, Miniaturen, Pelgrimstekens en Zegels," eds. Bert Cardon, Jan van der Stock, and Dominique Vanwijnsberghe, *Als Ich Can: Liber Amicorum in Memory of Dr. Maurits Smeyers*, vol. 1 (Leuven: Peeters Publishing, 2002), pp. 701–42; Jennifer M. Lee, "Searching for Signs: Pilgrims' Identity and Experience Made Visible in the *Miracula Sancti Thomae Cantuariensis*"; *Lee*, "Beyond the *Locus Santus*," pp. 363–81; Brian Spencer, "Canterbury Pilgrim Souvenirs Found in the Low Countries," in Van Beuningen, Koldeweij, and Kicken, *Heilig en Profaan 2*, pp. 105–11.

[36] A clear example of this occurs in the *Prayer Book of Philip the Bold* (Cambridge Fitzwilliam Museum MS 3–1954). Though no longer attached, offsets indicate that pilgrims' badges were affixed adjacent to Suffrage Prayers to various saints. Based on extant pilgrim badges, many of these offsets directly correlate to the flanking prayer; for example, a badge depicting the bust of Thomas Becket near the Suffrage to St. Thomas; a souvenir of St. Claude-in-the-Jura next to the Suffrage to St. Claude, and so forth. In this case, the power of the saint's images in both the manuscript illumination and the badge, combined with the Suffrage prayer, all served as an entreaty device to the book's owner (perhaps Duke Philip the Good or his son, Duke Charles the Bold), allowing the reader to recall standing in the presence of the saint's shrine and the efficacy of the saint while praying the suffrage. I explore manuscripts with pilgrim badges owned by the Burgundian ducal family at greater length in my dissertation.

Another compelling example of badges used in close conjunction with suffrages is a modest late-fifteenth century Dutch book of hours in Brussels (Bibliothèque Royale MS IV 497). The manuscript's suffrage prayers to saints are accompanied by blank spaces, left for illuminations never completed. On fols. 90v and 91r, for the Suffrages of Mary Magdalene and St. Barbara, the owner placed (now-lost) badges where the miniatures would have been located. A now-lost collection of approximately seven to nine badges also was located on fol. 103v, based on offsets.

[37] Hanneke van Asperen, "Gebed, geboorte, en bedevaart Geneaologie en pelgrim stekens in het getijdenboek D'Oiselet (Den Haag, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Ms 77 L 60)" *Desipientia* 11/2 (November 2004), p. 44.

[38] Kathryn Rudy describes a Holy Land pilgrim, a friar, who carried a "processional" book containing a series of prayers, responses, hymns, and psalms to be used while visiting churches and chapels in the Holy Land. "A Pilgrim's Book of Hours: Stockholm

as the reader moved through the pages. The reliving of the emotions and devotions associated with the acquisition of the badge, or badges, becomes the mental journey, and rather than experiencing the entire pilgrimage voyage by using the manuscript's contents, the reader could dip into a section of the book to focus devotions, the equivalent of following a shorter pilgrimage.

Not surprisingly, the majority of prayer books containing badges belonged to the upper and middle classes. Many of the surviving badges sewn into manuscripts were made of precious metals such as silver-gilt, silver, or gold,[39] and the books that contain(ed) badges were often of a more luxurious quality, frequently containing rich illuminations that, in late medieval society, only the affluent could afford.[40]

Royal Library A233," pp. 237–41. See also Rudy, "A Guide to Mental Pilgrimage," pp. 494–515 and Rudy's dissertation, "Northern European Visual Responses to Holy Land Pilgrimage, 1453–1550." In some instances, it seems plausible that the manuscripts actually journeyed with the books' owners on their various travels, perhaps even on pilgrimage, kept safe in a girdle purse. By doing so, the pilgrimage experience is doubled with two kinds of souvenirs: not only did the pilgrim acquire pilgrim badges that were later affixed in the manuscript, but also the pilgrim gained the remembrance of how the book was used during the physical journey (such as prayers along the route, or specific manuscript prayers to saints while visiting their namesake shrine).

[39] Jos Koldeweij notes that the rich would buy badges made of precious metals, while the poor pilgrims could only afford those made of tin or pewter. "Sacred and Profane: Medieval Mass-Produced Badges," in (eds.) Guy de Boe and Frans Verhaeghe, *Art and Symbolism in Medieval Europe*, vol. 5. (Zellik: Instituut voor het Archeologisch Patrimonium, 1997), p. 137. Brian Spencer also comments that aristocratic pilgrims such as the Dukes of Burgundy and the French king Charles VIII commissioned and bought the costlier badges (although King Louis XI of France once wore an inexpensive lead pilgrim badge on a hat), and observed that gold badges might have cost at least 300 times their equivalent in pewter. He further observes that copper and brass badges were cast by the second half of the fifteenth century, but few of these badges made of precious metals survive. See *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges*, pp. 12–13. Because of the intrinsic monetary value of these badges, their owners may have chosen not to sew them on cloaks or hats, but carried them for safekeeping after departing the pilgrimage shrine. Charles VII, for example, carried 42 gold badges from Notre-Dame in Embrun on a gold scarf with crimson lining.

[40] For more on the upper and middle classes who owned books of hours, see Roger S. Wieck, *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life (New York: George Braziller, Inc., 1988)*, pp. 33–35. Among the badge-augmented manuscripts once belonging to noble or royal owners are Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS 11035–37 and Cambridge, Fitzwilliam MS 3–1954 (divided portions of the *Prayer book of Philip the Bold*, with badges added perhaps by Philip the Good or another member of the Burgundian family); Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS lat. 1370 (*Hours of King Charles VIII*); Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS 1800 (*Prayer Book and Diptych of Philip the* Good); Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS 1859 (*Prayer Book of Emperor Charles V*); Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS s.n. 2624 (*Book of Hours of Emperor Ferdinand I*); Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS s.n.

While dozens of manuscripts with evidence of pilgrims' badges survive, their precise provenance is sometimes difficult to trace and their original owners, perhaps those who added the badges to the codices, often remain unknown. This raises questions, many of which remain unanswered. For example, it is unclear whether a manuscript's pilgrims' badges all were collected on one journey. Indeed, it is plausible that a group of badges kept in a book could be an amalgamation of a lifetime's worth of pilgrimage journeys experienced by the book owner. Whether all badges collected by the individual on pilgrimage found their way onto the pages of a manuscript is also uncertain. Some may have been given more priority than others, and thus deemed worthy of being sewn into the prayer book.[41] Moreover, it often cannot be determined if one person was solely responsible for the gathering of pilgrim souvenirs in a particular manuscript. The affixed badges could have been received as gifts or collected on pilgrimages across several family generations.[42]

2596 (*Book of Hours and Psalter of Ferdinand I*); and Paris Bibliothèque Nationale MS lat. 1159 (*Hours of Pierre II, Duke of Bretagne*). Sewing badges into books was not limited to the upper classes. Examples of humbler books with pilgrims' souvenirs survive, such as a late-fifteenth century Dutch book of hours in Brussels's Bibliothèque Royale (MS IV 497) described in n. 36.

[41] Despite the small, portable size of many books of hours, it is often difficult to prove whether books went with pilgrims on their journeys (and badges were thus sewn in as they went), or whether badges were collected and then assembled in the manuscript upon returning home (perhaps with additional blank folia inserted for the purpose of mounting badges). Thomas Kaufmann and Virginia Roehrig Kaufmann suggested that devotional books were taken on pilgrimages, and through the book's travel thus became repositories not only for pilgrims' badges, but other devotionalia and other ephemera found along the journey, such as dirt, stones, plants, and flowers. Kaufmann and Kaufmann cite unpublished discoveries by James Marrow of flowers and insects in manuscripts. In response to an e-mail query by the author, Dr. Marrow explained that while he did not record the specific examples of manuscripts with such ephemera during his research, he recalled finding only one or two insertions in a manuscript, rather than an assembling of a large collection of these objects. See Kaufmann and Kaufmann, "The Sanctification of Nature: Observations on the Origins of Trompe l'oeil in Netherlandish Book Painting of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries," pp. 57–59.

[42] For example, based on contemporary court accounts it is known that the Burgundian dukes and their families were known to purchase gold, silver-gilt, silver, and pewter badges for relatives, members of the court, and their assistants. Several generations of Burgundian dukes went on pilgrimage and visited famed shrines during political or diplomatic journeys. They repeatedly visited the same sites, including Notre-Dame at Halle, Notre-Dame at Aardenburg, Notre-Dame at Boulogne, and St. Adrian at Geraardsbergen. Other notable destinations for the Burgundian family include St. Claude-in-the-Jura, St. Servatius in Maastricht, and Aachen (for relics of both the Virgin and Charlemagne). See Albert Benoit, "Les Pèlerinages de Philippe

Another concern is the badges' location in the manuscript. Their arrangement within the codex may provide clues as to their purpose for the owner, as the reader's interaction with the badges potentially was affected by how they were grouped. In general, the placement of pilgrims' badges seems to follow two general trends. Often, the badges were collected on one or two folios, usually at the beginning or end of the book.[43] Perhaps since badges were slightly thicker than the manuscript's vellum folia, they could be kept in one place to avoid cluttering the rest of the book. The result is a small section of the manuscript highly concentrated with badges, allowing for easy access and reference by the owner. Another trend distributed badges throughout the pages of the manuscript, often near relevant text or illuminations where the owner found distinct devotional resonances between the badges and the codex's contents.[44]

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le Bon a Notre-Dame de Boulogne," *Société d'études de la province de Cambrai* 37 (1937), pp. 119–23; Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs*, p. 12; Monique Sommé, "Vie itinérante et résidences d'Isabelle de Portugal, duchesse de Bourgogne," *Revue du Nord* 79: 319 (Jan–Mar 1997), pp. 7–43; Hugo van der Velden, "Karel de Stoute op bedevaart: de aanschaf van pelgrimstekens door de graaf van Charolais," *Heilig en Profaan 2*, pp. 234–241; Harry Schnitker, "Margaret of York on Pilgrimage: The Exercise of Devotion and the Religious Traditions of the House of York," pp. 81–122.

[43] Among other examples include The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek MS 77 L 60, fol. 98; Paris, Bibliothèque Arsenal, MS 1176, fol. Av (with extant badges and an embroidery); Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale MS lat. 1394, fol. 1 (offsets on fol. 2); Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS 2895, fol. 1r (offsets); Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS 2596, fols. 1v, 371v; Leeds, University Library Brotherton 7, fol. 5 (offsets); Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS lat. 1159 (the *Hours of Pierre II, Duke of Bretagne*), fol. Iv (offsets on fol. II); Carpentras, Bibliothèque Inguimbertine MS 59 (*Hours of Antoine Bourdin*), fol. 110 (Vera icon badge and five offsets); Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS 1800 (*Prayer Book and Diptych of Philip the Good*), fols. II, and 32r (offsets); Berkeley, CA, Huntington Library, HM 1136, fol. 1 (offsets); Princeton University, Firestone Library Garrett 59, fols. 2v, 3 (offsets); Sotheby's 26 November 1985, lot 134 (offsets).

[44] Among other examples are Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 51; Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS 8645, fols. 6v, 9v(?), 23v, 30r, 35r(?), 37v(?), 71v; Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS 10.770, fol. 52v (offsets); Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS IV 497, fols. 90v, 91r; Brussels, Bilbiothèque Royale 10.541, on unfoliated flyleaf and fols. 10v, 13v, 17v(?), 64v(?); Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS 11035–37 (the *Prayer Book of Philip the Bold*), fols. 6r, 6v, 7r, 34v, 87v, 96r; Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum MS 3–1954 (the *Prayer Book of Philip the Bold*), fols. 226v, 227r, 237r, 237v, 239r, 240r, 241r, 243r, 244r, 246v, 250v, 251r, 252r, 252v, 253r, 274v, 275r; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale MS n.a.f. 16428 (*Prayer Book of Philip the Good*), fol. 94v, Chantilly, Bibliothèque Museé Condé MS XIV, C. 3, fols. 1v, 7r; and Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS 1859 (*Prayer Book of Emperor Charles V*), fols. 131v, 209v, 250r.

A Page of Pilgrimages: The D'Oiselet Hours

The *D'Oiselet Hours* has one of the largest and most intact collections of pilgrim badges sewn into a devotional manuscript.[45] (fig. 7.1) Made in Bruges between 1440 and 1460, this codex holds a collection of twenty-three metal pilgrims' badges, made of gold, pewter, and a lead-tin alloy. Once located opposite fol. 90v (as evidenced by the badge imprints still visible on this page), the badges are now fastened to fol. 98, the end cover page and part of a nineteenth-century quire.[46] Surmising the original placement of the badges is difficult, though traces of one badge offset are also still visible on folios IIv and 1, which begins the calendar for the month of January. This indicates that they may have been initially clustered together on one or two pages to be viewed simultaneously.

The pilgrimage destinations of the badges featured in the *D'Oiselet Hours* primarily focus on shrines in France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Switzerland.[47] They include:

- St. Hubert, St.-Hubert-en-Ardenne
- Virgin's Holy Tunic, Aachen
- Three Kings with Mary and Christ, Cologne
- St. Claude-in-the-Jura (three badges)
- Christ and Lazarus, perhaps La-Sainte-Beaume, Aix-en-Provence
- St. Quentin, Saint-Quentin
- Mary of Egypt (Mary Magdalene), La-Sainte-Beaume, Aix-en-Provence
- Virgin and Child, Bürren an der Aare (near Bern)
- Virgin and Child, Mont-Roland
- St. Adrian, Geraardsbergen

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[45] Now in The Hague (Koninklijke Bibliotheek MS 77 L 60), 98 fols., 196x134 mm. Latin prayers of Bruges use. Eleven full-page illuminations were executed by an artist dubbed the Master of the Small Eyes. The codex also contains border decoration, decorated initials, and pen initials with flourishes.

[46] The original folio on which the badges were located has since disappeared from the manuscript.

[47] Anne S. Korteweg, "Uniek getijdenboek met 23 pelgrimstekens." *Antiek* 28 (1994), pp. 470–71; Jos Koldeweij, "Pelgrimsinsignes in het Getijdenboek 'D'Oiselet'" in *Heilig en Profaan I* (1993), pp. 46–48; Hanneke van Asperen, "Gebed, geboorte, en bedevaart Geneaologie en pelgrim stekens in het getijdenboek D'Oiselet (Den Haag, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Ms 77 L 60)," pp. 39–46.

Fig. 7.1 *The D'Oiselet Hours*, The Hague Koninklijke Bibliotheek, MS 77 L 60 fol. 98, third quarter of the fifteenth century. Photo: permission of the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague.

- St. Martha, Tarascon[48]
- St. Nicholas, St.-Nicholas-de-Port
- Annunciation, s'Gravestand
- Annunciation badge, provenance unknown
- Holy Cross with shield, provenance unknown
- St. Theobald with shield, between two kneeling pilgrims, Thann
- Badge with unidentified martyr holding a palm about to be beheaded, with an angel placing a martyr's crown on his head, provenance unknown
- St. Anne between two bishops' busts, Düren
- Virgin and Child with bishop, Einsiedeln
- St. Denis, Paris

Thanks to genealogical entries in the codex, the historical provenance of the *D'Oiselet Hours* is well-documented, revealing that the likely collector of these pilgrimage badges was Claude de la Chambre (1467– ?).[49] He was a squire and arms bearer who spent most of his life in the village of Montjustin in Haute-Saône in the region of Franche-Comté, then a Burgundian province.[50] This assumption is based on the predominance of badges from the nearby pilgrimage site of St. Claude-in-the-Jura (Besançon), also in the Franche-Comté region Comté, which, as his namesake, would be of personal preference to Claude de la Chambre. Since he lived in Montjustin for most of his life, Claude likely would have visited nearby cult sites, such as St. Claude-in-the-Jura and the Virgin and Child at Mont-Roland. Indeed, all of the badges' destinations are relatively local sites within Western Europe: north and central France, including Paris, Picardy, and Alsace; Provence, Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, all of which he likely saw on his travels.[51]

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[48] This badge was originally identified as St. Margaret. Van Asperen, "Gebed, geboorte, en bedevaart Geneaologie," pp. 41–42.

[49] Claude's father, Symon de la Chambre of Burgundy, purchased this book. Aside from attaching pilgrim badges, this manuscript was further personalized with documentation of important family events, mainly births and baptisms, until the early seventeenth century. Symon wrote a lengthy annotation announcing the birth of Claude, suggesting that Claude's birth was the reason for the purchase of the manuscript. Based on this evidence, it appears that the manuscript was kept within the family for several generations. Koldeweij, "Pelgrimsinsignes in het Getijdenboek 'D'Oiselet," p. 46.

[50] Koldeweij, "Pelgrimsinsignes in het Getijdenboek 'D'Oiselet'," p. 46; Van Asperen, "Gebed, geboorte en bedevaart," p. 40.

[51] None of these badges are from famed distant shrines such as Rome, Santiago de Compostela, or the Holy Land.

The exact dates of Claude de la Chambre's trips to these sites are unknown, as is how he kept the badges on his person after acquiring them, whether or not he actually wore these pilgrim badges on his clothing during his journey or kept them in a bag or perhaps even in the manuscript if taken on his travels. Nonetheless, that he affixed these badges into his prayer book suggests that he deemed them, and the holy figures portrayed, important enough to be preserved. The inclusion of several badges of St. Claude, his name saint, indicates that he wished to personalize the prayer book, as well as to call upon his patron saint for special protection and blessings.

The nineteenth-century re-sewing of the pilgrim souvenirs in the *D'Oiselet Hours* erased any chance of knowing Claude de la Chambre's original arrangement and intentions for use of the badges in his book.[52] In their current composition, it seems that the decorative is prioritized over the devotional. Affixed with the same pale pink thread, the souvenirs are arranged in a vertically symmetrical pattern covering the entire folio. The two rectangular badges are positioned on the page's central axis, with gold badges clustered together in a square pattern in the upper half of the folio. They are not grouped iconographically or thematically, but by material and shape.

Although the organizational significance of the badges to Claude is unknown, much can be understood by examining his choice of souvenirs which reveals those pilgrimages he considered important for his spiritual life. Whether the visits to shrines were a short distance or further afield, these pilgrimages became one large, amalgamated journey, an accumulation of religious travels concentrated in one place for easy and immediate re-visitation and reflection, and for sharing with others. The pilgrimage memory displayed primarily on one folio allowed Claude greater flexibility to use the badges according to his own spiritual needs and edification: he could survey the visual impact of his entire "pilgrimage career" on one page, or he could focus on individual badges.

Additionally, placing the badges on one page concentrated the spiritual efficacy of the pilgrims' badges—the saints' holy presence, as well

[52] Perhaps the badges were originally arranged and affixed thematically by grouping of saints (for example, the Marian badges, or badges of his name saint, Saint Claude singled out on the page), which would suggest that perhaps Claude prioritized certain badges over others based on their placement on the folio. He may have also fastened the badges according to the order of their acquisition.

as the souvenirs' role as contact relics—for easy access by the reader. Claude de la Chambre and subsequent owners of the *D'Oiselet Hours* could simultaneously call on the sanctified community of "all saints"—and, in the case of Claude, special attention to his name saint—and experience their holy presence through the badges simply by turning to one page. After originally having their saintly protection while on his journeys, Claude could call on their continual assistance in his prayer book.

Hanneke van Asperen suggested that the badges of the Virgin and other saints in this codex functioned as devotional images to which devotees could address their prayers. In turn, the badges could emulate Suffrage prayers, which were a common feature in Hours but not in the *D'Oiselet* manuscript.[53] Placing the badges all on one folio also may have provided a personal spiritual connection to the saints listed in the repetitive and hypnotic Litany prayers—evoked for their help and blessings—which are included in the *D'Oiselet Hours*. The collection of pilgrims' badges on one folio visually echoes the list of saints' names that appear after the Penitential Psalms. In turn, the reader can read across or down the page, appealing to each saint depicted in the badges and asking for their blessings and protection in a litany form ("…pray for us"). Since Claude de la Chambre visited these saints' shrines personally, this form of visual litany would be a revisiting of each pilgrimage destination. The entreaty to the saints becomes a series of cursory memories of each saint, each shrine, and each petition made at that shrine, from his religious journeys. The pilgrim badge litany facilitated a rapid mental pilgrimage through all the holy sites Claude visited.

Pilgrimage across the Pages: Oxford Bodleian Library MS Douce 51

In contrast, a small sample of devotional manuscripts demonstrates pilgrims' badges aligned in a one-to-one correlation with certain prayers and images.[54] Here, the pilgrimage experience and the book's

[53] Van Asperen, "Gebed, geboorte en bedevaart," pp. 43–45.

[54] There are instances where the collection of badges clearly and deliberately intersects with a manuscript prayer or image. A portion of the *Prayer Book of Philip the Bold* (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS 11035–37) contains a famous (and believed to be miraculous) image of the Virgin and Child in the Crescent Moon (fol. 6v), which faced a prayer to the Virgin (fol. 7r). A collection of pilgrims' badges, all likely

contents were intertwined, demonstrating a complex, nuanced, and multilayered relationship between badge and prayer. As Jos Koldeweij noted "…by literally sewing the laboriously obtained badges onto one or more pages of a prayer-book, the concrete reality of the object from the pilgrim resort [site] was combined with the abstract spirituality of the prayer or Biblical text."[55] In turn, the act of remembering and re-experiencing the pilgrimage becomes transformed through reading and contemplating the adjacent prayers and imagery. The book's prayers become an integral—indeed a necessary—part of reliving pilgrimage experience. The journey through the words of the book's prayers mirrors the physical journey; the meditation on the images in both miniatures and badges mirrors the meditation on the image of the shrine itself.

The badges amplified the spiritual power of the manuscript's contents as they distributed the sacred and apotropaic power of the pilgrimage shrine through the pages of the book. Placed next to a specific prayer, the badges supplemented the devotion of the owner during reading or meditation. The combined efficacy of the saint's image in the souvenir, the badge as a contact relic, and the manuscript's words

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Marian in their subject, originally surrounded both the illumination and the prayer on these two folios. Based on their faint offsets, Kurt Köster suggested eighteen souvenirs between the two pages, though a re-examination of the offsets suggests the number could be as high as twenty (due to offsets being missed or merged). The badges were certainly collected by members of the Burgundian ducal family, perhaps by Duke Philip the Good.

By combining prayer, illumination, and pilgrim badges in this codex, the Virgin's presence is concentrated and clearly on display when the book was open. If the spiritual efficacy of Mary was believed to be transferred from the shrine to the badges, it converged on the image of Mary, the Marian prayers, the Marian badges as possible contact relics and, in turn, devotion to Mary while on pilgrimage. Here, the holy efficacy of the Marian badges is as important—if not more—as the memory of the pilgrimage journeys to Marian shrines. The collection of those badges, combined with the power of the illumination of the Virgin and Child, provide the devotional focus towards the Virgin. As previously mentioned, other pilgrims' badges were present in MS 11035–37, including four additional metal souvenirs (now lost) on fols. 34v and 87v, and four extant Vera Icons on fol. 96r. For further discussion, see Köster, "Kollektionen Metallener Wallfahrts-Devotionalien," pp. 87–95; Camille Gaspar and Frédéric Lyna. *Les Principaux Manuscrits a Peintures de la Biliothèque Royale de Belgique*, Part I. (Bruxelles: Bibliothèque royale Albert ler; reprint, 1984), pp. 419–423; *Art from the Court of Burgundy: The Patronage of Philip the Bold and John the Fearless 1364–1419* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 2004), pp. 107–109.

[55] Koldeweij, "Pilgrim Badges Painted in Manuscripts: A North Netherlandish Example," p. 211. Koldeweij also notes that painted badges were valued in much the same way.

and pictures would provide a focal point for piety, a *locus sanctus* within the codex.

Such a case could be argued with a book of hours now in Oxford's Bodleian Library (MS Douce 51), originating in France around 1490.[56] Although the original owner is unknown, and it is uncertain whether the book's owner took the codex on pilgrimage (or pilgrimages), it appears that this owner made a conscientious effort to place pilgrims' badges in close correspondence with the book's images and prayers.

Originally, at least six thin metal badges were sewn in the richly illuminated folia margins throughout the manuscript. Of these, five still survive, dispersed over four separate leaves:

- Fol. 45v: Virgin and Child surrounded by kneeling angels in a heart-shaped frame
- Fol. 58v: Virgin and Child in front of crossbeam, in a heart-shaped mandorla
- Fol. 59r: Virgin and Child in Gothic dais (Notre-Dame-du-Puy-en-Velay)
- Fol. 59r: Crucifixion badge
- Fol. 74v: Mary Magdalen (St.-Maximian-La-Sainte-Baume)

Additionally, an offset on folio 123r suggests that the manuscript held another badge. Whether this badge was lost or removed, or whether an extant badge was moved to another page, is unclear.[57] The badges are cast of a metal alloy—perhaps tin- or lead-based—with the exception of one tarnished silver badge. The detail of their stamping is occasionally worn, and thus unclear. All are sewn into the book with at least two strands of thread, usually on the upper and lower center of each badge.

The prayers and illuminations that the owner supplemented with badges are all related to the Virgin Mary. Perhaps not coincidentally, several of the badges inserted also depict the Virgin. The first, on the verso of fol. 45v (with an offset on fol. 46v), is adjacent to a full-page illumination of the Virgin and Child surrounded by kneeling angels.

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[56] 135 × 96 mm, 244 folios. The codex contains Latin prayers of Roman use. Its program of decoration, likely painted by the Master of Edward IV, contains numerous full- and half-page illuminations, many surrounded by Flemish panel borders.

[57] The offset's shape and dimensions are nearly identical to the badge on fol. 45v, suggesting that the badge may have been moved from this folio to its current position.

(fig. 7.2) Partially covering the yellow panel border in the upper left corner is a square badge with a heart-shaped frame containing a scallop shell, associated with pilgrimage. On the shell is a representation of the Virgin Mary with the Infant Christ in her left arm in a small enclosed arch.

Despite its uncertain provenance,[58] the distinct Virgin and Child iconography encourages comparisons with its adjacent miniature and text. The accompanying picture opens the Votive Mass of the Virgin; unsurprisingly, the illumination depicts the Virgin and Child. The owner observed the obvious iconographic correlation between miniature and acquired badge and fastened the souvenir next to the image for a direct correspondence between both images. Equally striking are the similarities in shapes and patterns between the badge and the illumination. In the miniature, the tips of the sloping wings of the angel in the background reach to the sides of the archway. Combined with the rounded forms of the two arches, the wings' edges form the shape of a heart. This form is similar to the heart-shaped frame of the metal badge, suggesting that the owner not only recalled iconographic resonances between the dual depictions of the Virgin and Child but also saw visual resonances in the compositions of each image.[59]

Another badge, found in the upper left corner of a blank folio (fol. 58v), is a heart-shaped souvenir illustrating a half-length Madonna with the Infant Christ on her left arm. They are in front of a crossbeam seen in the upper background and appear within a smaller

[58] The Virgin holding Christ was a popular motif on pilgrims' badges in the late Middle Ages. Many pilgrimage sites dedicated to the Virgin produced badges with minor variants of this subject, ranging from famous shrines like Halle in the Low Countries, and Rocamadour and Le Puy-en-Velay in south-central France, to lesser-known destinations. As a result, pilgrim badge scholars are reluctant to assign this particular souvenir to a specific locale. For comparisons, see catalog entries of Marian pilgrim badges in Van Beuningen and Koldeweij, *Heilig en Profaan*; Van Beuningen, Koldeweij, and Kicken, *Heilig en Profaan* 2; and Kunera.

[59] Scholars have noted the rise of the heart as a metaphor in the context of late medieval devotion. In the chapter "House of the Heart" in *Nuns as Artists: The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent*, Jeffrey Hamburger examines a cycle of images depicting the soul's union with Christ. In each, the heart is used as a frame for the interior scene, and signifies the heart of the devotee, pp. 137–75. Of further interest to this badge and miniature is the late medieval emphasis on silent prayer, to be read in the heart or with the heart. J. Paul Saenger, "Books of Hours and Reading Habits of the Later Middle Ages," in ed. Roger Chartier, *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 141–73. The images in both the miniature and badge could be utilized for silent heart-centered prayer and contemplation.

Fig. 7.2 Book of Hours, Oxford Bodleian Library, MS Douce 51 fol. 45v, *c*. 1490. Photo: permission of the Bodleian Library. Oxford.

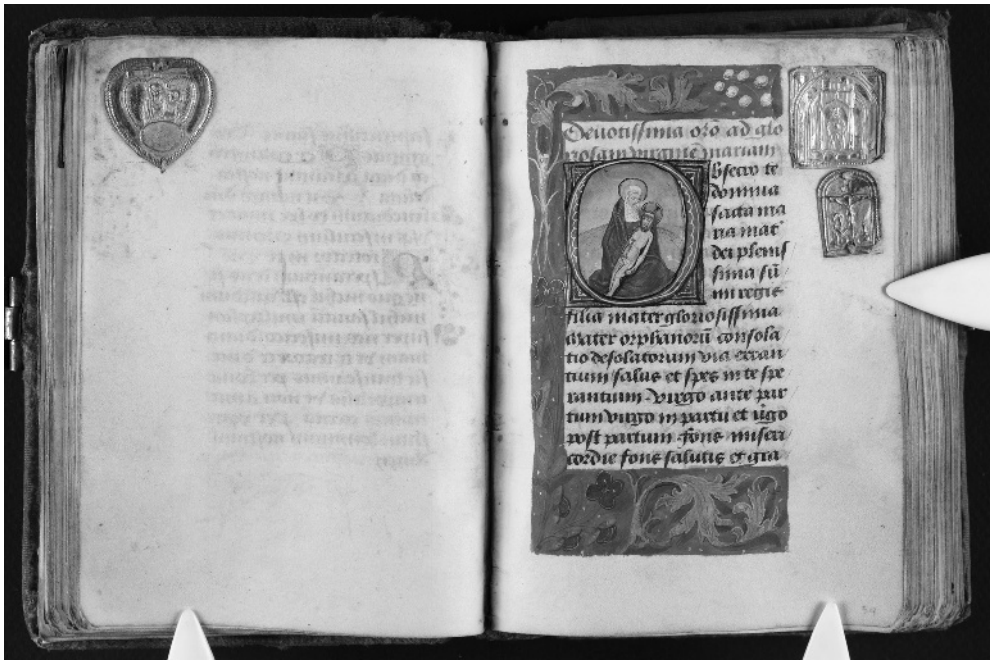

Fig. 7.3 Book of Hours, Oxford Bodleian Library, MS Douce 51 fols. 58v–59r, *c.* 1490. Photo: permission of the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

heart-shaped halo or mandorla. Beneath the Virgin and Child is a small, smooth oval disk, perhaps originally meant for an inscription. (fig. 7.3) As with the previous Virgin and Child badge, a direct correlation between the fol. 58v badge and other extant Marian badges cannot be determined.[60]

[60] Several heart-shaped badges with generic or secular iconography have been found. See catalog entries in Van Beuningen and Koldeweij, *Heilig en Profaan*; Van Beuningen, Koldeweij, and Kicken, *Heilig en Profaan* 2; and Kunera. Also, numerous heart-shaped badges depicting the Virgin and Child have been unearthed in the Netherlands; in at least two instances, the heart badge contains a representation of the Virgin and Child (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS IV 441, fol. 22r, and New York, Pierpont Morgan Library MS 52, fol. 353r).

Also, heart-shaped badges were also painted in Flemish manuscript margins. One early sixteenth-century badge is associated with an Amsterdam pilgrimage site dedicated to the Miraculous Host (the back of the badge depicts Virgin Mary with the Christ child on her right arm, flanked by two high candles). Another Virgin and Child composition is featured on the reverse of a heart-shaped badge from the shrine of St. Servatius in Maastricht.

The margin of the opposite page (fol. 59r) contains two badges placed one above the other, with their imprints still visible on the opposite folio. The upper badge, square with damaged corners, shows the Virgin and Child seated frontally in a rounded frame with an ogee Gothic arch. The badge has been identified as originating at the pilgrimage site of Notre Dame du Puy-en-Velay.[61] Below it, an arched, rectangular badge with a damaged corner portrays the Crucifixion at Calvary. To the left of the cross is a kneeling figure, most likely Mary Magdalen; to the right is an undistinguishable object, perhaps her ointment jar. The badge's origin is unclear; although souvenirs depicting Christ's death have been linked to sites in the Holy Land, Cologne, and Lucca, Italy, other extant examples have not been localized to a particular site. It is intriguing that the presence of Mary Magdalen beside the Crucifixion departs from the more conventional iconography of the Virgin Mary and St. John, perhaps indicating an origin from a shrine dedicated to Mary Magdalen.

Nonetheless, the badges' iconography shows strong resonances with both text and illumination. The page, which opens the prayer for the *Obsecro te*, contains a historiated initial for the 'O' depicting the Pietà, which often introduced this prayer of direct entreaty to the Virgin. The text of the *Obsecro te* not only describes her role as the redeemer of mankind, but also focuses on her emotions as she experienced Christ's Passion, as seen in other contemporary texts.[62]

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[61] With its *sedes sapientiae* or throne of Wisdom iconography, the badge was previously associated with Notre Dame de Rocamadour and Notre Dame de Montpellier in south-central France, as well as Notre-Dame-de-Halle in the Low Countries. The most recent attribution was posted on Kunera.

[62] Roger S. Wieck, *Time Sanctified*, p. 96, *Painted Prayers: The Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1997), pp. 86–87, although Wieck notes illustrations of the Pietà were more frequently used to open the *O intemerata* prayer. His translation of the *Obsecro te* is as follows (*Time Sanctified*, pp. 163–164): "I beseech you, Mary, holy lady, mother of God, most full of piety, daughter of the greatest king, most glorious mother…through that holy, unutterable joy with which your spirit rejoiced in that hour when the Son of God was announced to you by the archangel Gabriel and was conceived…and through those most holy fifteen joys that you had in your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ; and through that holy, great compassion and that most bitter sorrow in your heart that you had when you saw your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, nude and lifted up on the cross, hanging, crucified, wounded, thirsty…and you heard him cry 'Eli' and you saw him dying; and through the five wounds of your Son and through the collapse of his flesh because of the great pain of his wounds; then through the sorrow that you had when you saw him wounded; and through the fountains of his blood and through all his suffering; and through all the sorrow of your heart and through the fountains of your tears; with all

The late medieval interest in sympathizing with the Virgin may have prompted the book's owner to place these two badges next to this prayer and miniature. On one hand, the Crucifixion badge, depicting the moment that inspired Mary's grief—seen in the historiated initial's Pietà scene—provides the reader with an illustration of Christ's execution described in the text of the *Obsecro te*, and expands on the narrative cycle of the initial. In contrast, the badge of the Virgin and Infant Christ underscores the parallel act of Mary holding her son, and so both the beginning and end of Christ's life are depicted. Thus, the placement of both badges by the *Obsecro te* and its illumination further supplements the prayer for the book's owner, providing a nuanced juxtaposition of Marian themes—in particular, the physical and emotional contact between the Virgin and Christ at his birth and death—for devotional meditation. Furthermore, the concentration of these three pilgrim badges indicates the importance of this prayer and image to the manuscript's owner.

The last surviving badge, on fol. 74r, accompanies the Hours of the Virgin with a full-page illumination of the Annunciation. (fig. 7.4) It is a small oval form, partially covering the green panel border in the upper right corner, depicting Mary Madgalen praying, dressed in a hair shirt as she is carried up to Heaven by four angels. It is comparable to other badges found at her pilgrimage shrine in Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume in southeastern France.[63]

The reason behind the placement of the Mary Magdalene badge next to an illumination of the Annunciation is not clear. The badge's iconography is remarkably similar to that of the Assumption, which depicts the Virgin physically carried to heaven by angels.[64] The badge's

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the saints and the elect of God. Come hasten to my aid and counsel, in all my prayers and requests, in all my difficulties and needs, and in all those things that I do…and secure for me, your servant, from your esteemed Son the fullness of all mercy and consolation, all counsel and aid, all help, all blessings and sanctification, all salvation, peace, and prosperity, all joy and gladness, and an abundance of everything good for the spirit and the body…please hear and receive this humble prayer and grant me eternal life. Listen and hear me, Mary, sweetest Virgin, Mother of God and of mercy. Amen."

[63] See also The Hague KB MS 77 L 60, discussed earlier in this essay. Although some extant badges from this site depict Mary Magdalene wiping the feet of Christ, other badges with the iconographic motif noted above have been found.

[64] Perhaps the owner of the badge confused the imagery of the badge, although this would be unusual had the owner gone on pilgrimage and remembered its provenance. Yet if the badge was a gift, the owner may have been uncertain or unaware of its original provenance.

Fig. 7.4a

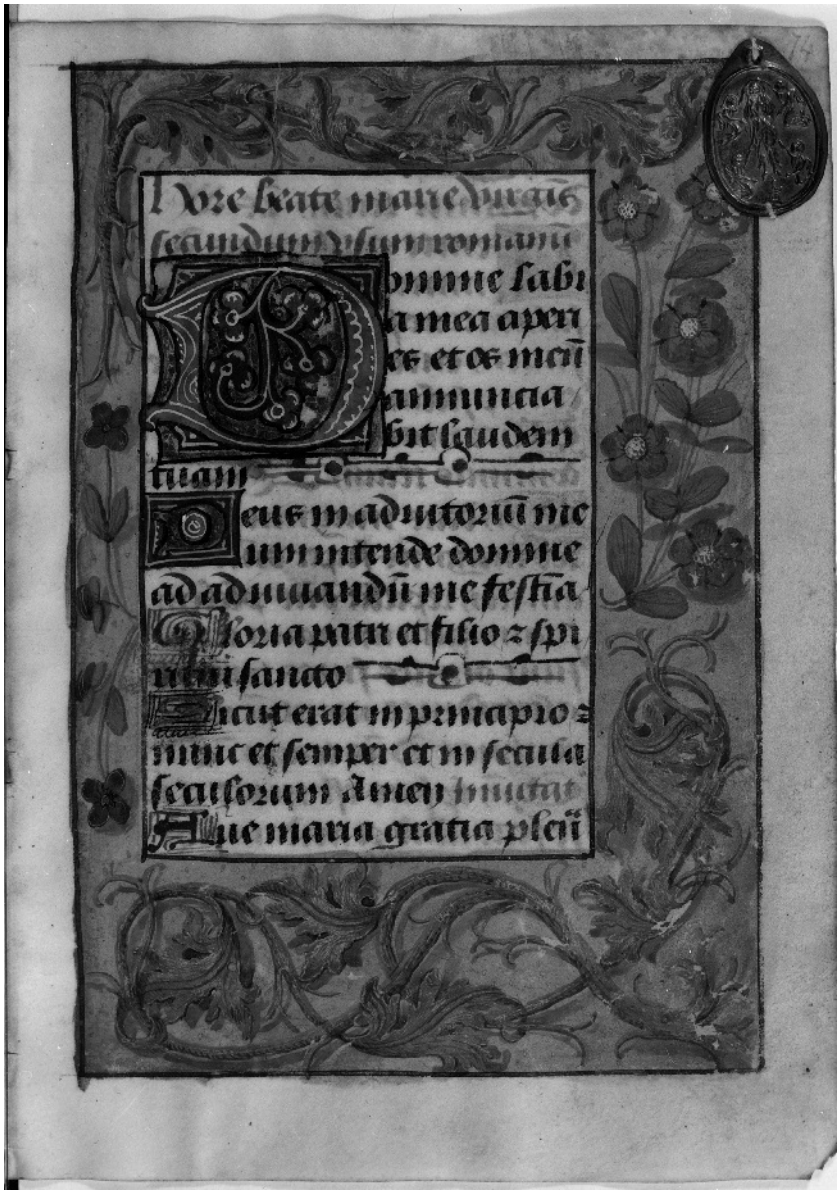

Fig. 7.4b

Fig. 7.4 Book of Hours, Oxford Bodleian Library, MS Douce 51 fols. 73v–4r, *c.* 1490. Photo: permission of the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

location at the opening of the Hours of the Virgin also might be explained in that this pilgrimage church was where Mary Magdalene was re-imagined in the thirteenth century as the erstwhile sinful figure of perfect penitence and declared as co-patron of the Dominican church, along with the Virgin. The Virgin and Mary Magdalen thus are linked at this pilgrimage site and, in turn, in this manuscript.[65]

In MS Douce 51, the pilgrimage experience, exemplified by the pilgrim badges, is intrinsically linked to the prayers and illuminations. Careful decisions were made by the manuscript's owner to associate certain badges with specific prayers and illuminations, determining not only which badges were important enough to be preserved in the book, but also which prayers were significant enough to be supplemented with the badges and their associated talismanic powers. Marian badges comprise the majority of pilgrims' souvenirs in this manuscript perhaps due to the book owner's particular devotion to the Virgin and the wish to enhance the Marian prayers and images in the book of hours.[66] The badges provide additional spiritual efficacy to the texts and illuminations directed to the Virgin, focusing the owner's prayers calling for Mary's intervention and aid. The memory of the pilgrimage journey, being at the shrine, and the meditation upon the prayer after returning from the journey are inexorably linked. A full circle of recollection occurred each time the book was opened.

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[65] Brian Spencer notes that the pilgrimage to St.-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume was publicized and a pilgrim could receive several indulgences thanks to a papal decree. *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges*, p. 239.

[66] It seems unlikely that only badges from Marian pilgrimage sites would have been collected, for the pilgrim would have encountered shrines of other renowned saints while on pilgrimage. Still, identifying the route(s) the pilgrim may have followed presents a challenge since the precise provenance for some of these badges cannot be conclusively ascertained. While sites in the Low Countries regions cannot be dismissed as possible destinations, particularly if the Marian badges have provenances such as Amsterdam or Halle, a stronger supposition is a pilgrimage to sites throughout south-central France. For example, the pilgrimage site of Ste. Maximin-La-Ste.-Baume (fol. 74r)—a badge that can be identified here—would be plausible for a pilgrim visiting sites such as Le Puy-en-Velay (fols. 45v, 58v) or Rocamadour. This south-central France hypothesis might be further strengthened with the manuscript's later provenance: in the sixteenth century, the manuscript belonged to Bernard and Margaret de Bonnoel of Bordeaux. In 1582, it was owned by Jehan Vitrac of Bordeaux; his granddaughter Marguerite Brun gave it in 1655 to her grandson Jacque de Maures, who also lived in Bordeaux. Otto Pächt and J.J.G. Alexander, *Illuminated Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, Oxford* (Oxford: University of Oxford, 1973), p. 167.

Imaged and imagined pilgrimage: Painted pilgrims' badges in the margins of manuscripts

As part of the larger repertoire of marginal imagery in late Flemish manuscript book design, painted pilgrims' badges began to appear, with minor exceptions, from the 1480s until the mid-sixteenth century, rapidly growing in popularity as an iconographic border motif.[67] Painted in alternating gold and silver, their coloring alluded to the upper ranks of lay medieval society who collected luxury pilgrim souvenirs,[68] as well as jewels or pearls in the marginal decoration. Rendered in varying levels of detail, the badges are evenly arranged on a three-sided or four-sided panel border, on a one- or two-page layout of border decoration.[69]

Scholars accept that painted pilgrim badges directly reference the actual practice of sewing pilgrim badges in manuscripts,[70] and they may have been part of a larger repertoire of objects collected during pilgrimages and kept in a manuscript.[71] While a focus on this iconographic motif above other marginal iconography in Flemish illumina-

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[67] The earliest known painted representations of pilgrim badges are in two books of hours from the Northern Netherlands *c.* 1430s–1440s, both believed to have been painted by the Master of Catherine of Cleves. They are Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery MS W 782, known as the *Van Alphen Hours*, and New York, Pierpont Morgan Library MS 917 and MS 945, more commonly known as the *Hours of Catherine of Cleves*. Both manuscripts contain painted representations of scallops' shells, and the Van Alphen Hours illustrates a scallop shell with a metal badge over the shell. John Plummer, *The Book of Hours of Catherine of Cleves* New York: Pierpont Morgan Library, 1964; Jos Koldeweij, "Pilgrim Badges Painted in Manuscripts: A North Netherlandish Example," pp. 211–218;"Pelgrimstekens in de Marge" in *Heilig en Profaan I* (1993), pp. 38–45.

[68] In several manuscripts, the silver badges have since oxidized, making their dark shapes illegible. Pilgrims' badges are occasionally shown next to other precious objects, such as jewels, pearls, or cameos. In one example (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS 1979, fol. 108r), several *trompe l'oeil* flies rest on the badges.

[69] In at least one instance, the *Grimani Breviary* (Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana MS. lat. I. 99), the badges are arranged within a narrow one-sided panel adjacent to the text. Single souvenirs were also, though less frequently, depicted in the margins in what Anne Margreet W. As-Vijvers calls an "Einzelmotive." See "Marginal Decoration in Ghent-Bruges Manuscripts," in eds. Rita Schlusemannn, Jos. M.M. Hermans, and Margaret Hoogvliet, *Sources for the History of Medieval Books and Libraries* (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1999), pp. 245–56.

[70] This idea was first proposed by Köster, "Religiöse Medaillen und Wallfahrts-Devotionalien," p. 463, 479–84; Köster, "Gemalte Kollektionen," pp. 487–90, 520–35. Kaufmann and Kaufmann support this hypothesis, p. 54.

[71] These objects include pressed flowers, peacock feathers, and insects, which may explain their appearance in later Flemish marginal imagery. See n. 36 of this essay and Kaufmann and Kaufmann, p. 58.

tion may demonstrate a particular bias, the painted pilgrim badges are historically relevant because, like their actual counterparts, they not only represent geographically identifiable locales but likewise allude to the popular contemporary devotional practice of pilgrimage.[72] At issue is whether painted badges were valued in a manner similar to real badges sewn in other manuscript. In other words, were the painted badges used like the actual badges to help the viewer experience imaginative pilgrimage?

Border decorations depicting pilgrims' badges were associated with manuscript workshop production around Ghent and Bruges; this motif does not appear anywhere else. Though no physical evidence survives, scholars believe that Ghent and Bruges illuminators developed and used patterns and pattern books of iconographic motifs, with copies altered by subsequent artists and their workshops.[73] Early

[72] Scholars have noted possible religious symbolism of some of the other objects depicted in the Flemish panel borders. Certain flowers, such as irises, roses, violets, columbine, and lilies signify the Virgin and her feast days. Other flowers are associated with Christ and his Passion, such as the red carnation. Pansies are also associated with memory (the French term for pansy, "pensée," also meaning "thought"). See Celia Fisher, *Flowers in Medieval Manuscripts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), pp. 17–40; Anne Margreet W. As-Vijvers, "Marginal Meaning? The Interpretation of Ghent-Bruges Border Decoration," *Oud Holland* 116: 1 (2003), pp. 12–17. Border decoration also included rosaries, often encircling images of the Virgin. Kate Challis commented on possible religious meanings in the representations of jewelry in border margins, aside from their indicating rank and wealth in late medieval society. Some jewelry depicted in manuscript margins reflects obvious religious references, including crucifixes or Christ's monogram IHS. "Marginalized Jewels: The Depiction of Jewellry in the Borders of Flemish Devotional Manuscripts" in eds. Margaret M. Manion and Bernard J. Muir, *The Art of the Book: Its Place in Medieval Worship* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 1998), esp. pp. 266–69.

For more on categories of panel borders in Flemish manuscript illumination, see Greet Nijs, "Typology of the Border Decoration in the Manuscripts of the Ghent-Bruges School," in eds. Bert Cardon, Jan Van der Stock, Dominique Vanwijnsberghe, *Als Ich Can: Liber Amicorum in Memory of Professor Dr. Maurits Smeyers, vol. 2* (Leuven: Peeters Publishing, 2002), pp. 1007–1036.

[73] In her study of the Master of the David Scenes in the Grimani Breviary, Anne Margreet W. As-Vijvers noted that illuminators from the generation of the Master of the David Scenes derived border motifs from models for earlier types of marginal decoration. The illuminators often used motifs which were easy to isolate—and thus copy—from the context of larger border designs or illustrations. Evidence exists for the use of tracing and other methods of reproduction, and for the existence of model drawings as well as full-color models. The illuminators chose the motifs appropriate for each margin. Often their working methods included making minor variations on existing marginal motifs, in the process of which the models were adapted and changed. At the same time, there was "the opposite tendency to standardize the motifs and the processes by which variations were made." As-Vijvers further observes that motifs taken from the same model source were usually applied within one gathering,

representations of painted badges from the last decades of the fifteenth century appear closest in copying actual pilgrim badges. Scholars have conclusively linked painted and actual badges from shrines such as Notre-Dame in Halle, Notre-Dame at Boulogne-sur-Mer, St. Adrian in Geraardsbergen, St. Servatius in Maastricht, St. Cornelius in Ninove, St. Dympha in Geel, and the Holy Tunic at Aachen, among others.[74] Many manuscripts also include depictions of the Vera Icon or Holy Face, the popular parchment souvenir commonly associated with the pilgrimage to Rome. Another variant of the painted badges motif is the scallop shell, an object associated with several Western European pilgrimages, the most famous being Santiago de Compostela and the Cult of St. James.[75] Frequently the scallop shells are arranged in a repeating grid pattern within a diamond or square field, such as in a book of hours now in Munich (Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 28345, fol. 265r), (fig. 7.5), in which the scallop shells are aptly arranged around the Suffrage prayer to St. James the Great, in reference to the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.[76]

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or perhaps even on the same bifolio, indicating that the bifolio was a working unit. In some cases, the distribution of motifs suggests a common source for apparently related images or patterns. The David Master owned the models for the single motifs, which were kept over the decades and made available to his workshop or co-illuminators when necessary. "Creation by Variation: The Uses of Models in Ghent-Bruges Marginal Decoration." Historians of Netherlandish Art 2002 Conference Proceedings, Antwerp: http://www.hnanews.org/2002/papers/margreet.htm, and As-Vijvers, "Marginal Decoration in Ghent-Bruges Manuscripts," pp. 245–56.

[74] Kurt Köster, "Religiöse Medaillen und Wallfahrts-Devotionalien in der Flämischen Buchmalerei des 15. und Frühen 16. Jahrhunderts"; Köster, "Gemalte Kollektionen"; Köster, "Pilgerzeichen und Wallfahrtsplaketten von St. Adrian in Geraardsbergen," pp. 103–120; Jos Koldeweij, "Servatius in Veelvoud en Enkelvoud Maastrichtse Boekbanden, Miniaturen, Pelgrimstekens en Zegels," pp. 701–42.

[75] *Pectens Maximus L.* Numerous pilgrims' scallop shells with piercings have been discovered (either in the beak of the shell, or—to a lesser extent—the ears), as in *Heilig en Profaan*, pp. 163–64. Metal replicas of scallop shells were also made; *op. cit.*, pp. 164–167. The scallop shell was also associated with pilgrimage to Mont-St.-Michel, as well as Canterbury. See Denis Bruna, *Enseignes de Pèlerinage et Enseignes Profanes*, pp. 185–86; Brian Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular* Badges, pp. 40–41; and Kunera. Due to the large numbers of pilgrims travelling through Europe to Santiago de Compostela, the scallop shell eventually became a generic symbol of pilgrimage itself.

[76] Other examples include Oxford Bodleian Library MS Douce 219–220 (the *Hours of Engelbert of Nassau*), fol. 84v; Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS I.B.51 (the *Flora Codex*), fol. 151; Alnwick Castle, Percy MS 482 (the *Hours of Charlotte de Bourbon*), fol. 46r; and Berlin, Museen Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, MS 78 B 12 (the *Hours of Mary and Maximilian*), fols. 90v/91r. Other manuscripts depict scallop shells hanging from trellis patterns, surrounding the Suffrage of St. James and full-page illuminations of the saint, similar to the Munich manuscript. They include

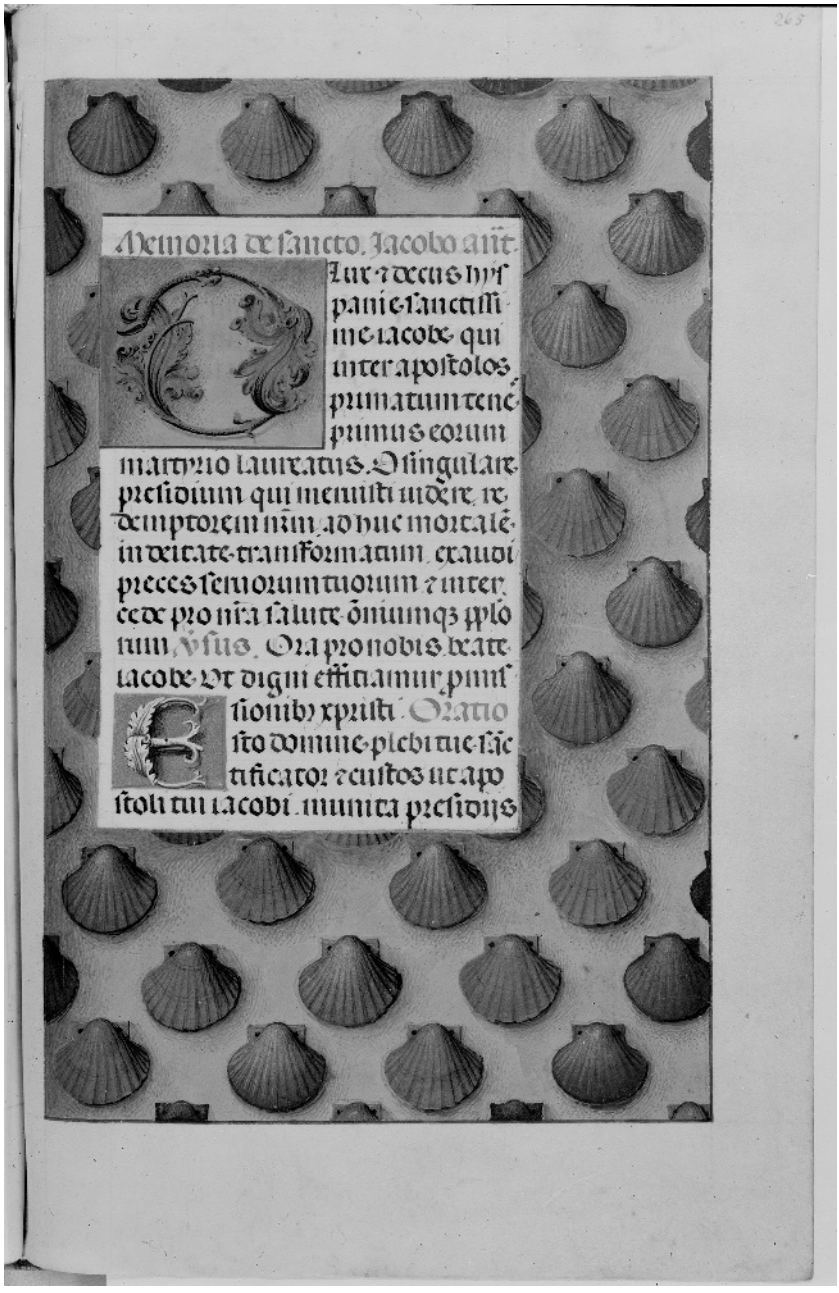
Memoria de sancto Jacobo ant
Aur ⁊ decus hyſ
panie ſanctiſſi
me iacobe qui
inter apoſtolos
primatum tene
primus eorum
martyrio laureatus. O ſingulare
preſidium qui meruiſti uidere re
demptorem nrm ad huc mortale
in ꝑegrinate tranſformatum. ecauoi
preces ſeruorum tuorum ⁊ inter
cede pro nra ſalute ōnuumq; ꝓfi
tum. ẏſus. Ora pro nobis beate
iacobe. Ut digni efficiamur pmiſ
ſionib; xpi. Oratio
ſto domine plebi tue ſan
tificator ⁊ cuſtos ut apo
ſtoli tui iacobi. munita preſidiis

Fig. 7.5 Book of Hours, Munich Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS CLM 28345 fol. 265r. Photo: permission of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich.

Subsequent manuscript artists at the beginning of the sixteenth century attempted to render painted badges in a similar level of detail as earlier models. Yet other manuscript artists, perhaps unfamiliar with the specific badge iconography they were copying, reproduced the figures on a more schematic, rudimentary level. Iconographic detail also could be distanced from the iconography seen on actual badges; rather, the artists used generic religious motifs or themes, or scenes that cannot be linked to a specific pilgrimage shrine. These include crosses, doves representing the Holy Spirit, the Ascension, the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God), busts of saints, popes, and bishops, and nonsensical inscriptions, none of which have iconographic precedents in actual pilgrim badges. Smaller painted badges often were reduced to basic circles, diamonds, and ovals.

Despite the commonality of the pilgrim badge motif which resulted from copying workshop models—and unlike other objects in border panel imagery, such as insects, flowers, and jewelry—the high level of specific iconographic detail in painted pilgrim badges provides an opportunity to attribute them to certain artists or groups of artists. In fact, a small number of Ghent-Bruges workshops known to have completed manuscripts with painted badge borders can be identified.[77] Furthermore, while it cannot be concluded that a master's hand was involved in the marginal illustrations of painted badges, in some instances a common artistic hand is apparent, allowing manuscripts be grouped together based on stylistic similarities and perhaps assigned to one specific illuminator.[78]

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a book of hours in London's British Library Add. MS 35313, fol. 215v; and Sotheby's, London, June 19, 2001, lot 36 (the *Hours of Albrecht of Brandenburg*), fol. 17r.

[77] Space does not permit a full discussion on artistic and workshop attributions of this border motif, though several illuminators are strongly associated with representations of painted badges. Kurt Köster primarily assigned these panel borders to Gerard Horenbout, Alexander Bening, and his son Simon Bening. More recent attributions include the Vienna Master of Mary of Burgundy and in particular the Master of the First Prayer Book of Maximilian (sometimes associated or attributed to Alexander Bening), whose style indicated a dependence on a large body of patterns that originated during the 1470's with the Vienna Master of Mary of Burgundy. Later generations of illuminators include the Master of James IV of Scotland, the Master of the David Scenes in the Grimani Breviary, the Master of the Soane Hours, and Simon Bening, the son of Alexander and the likely inheritor of his body of patterns. See these artists' entries in *Illuminating the Renaissance: The Triumph of Flemish Manuscript Painting in Europe*, eds. Thomas Kren and Scot McKendrick (Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003).

[78] Stylistic commonalities of painted badges are apparent in Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS IV 480, fol. 163v/164r; Chantilly, Musée Condé MS 77 (formerly MS 1595),

One-to-one iconographic correlations between painted badges and specific extant souvenirs are readily apparent to the modern eye, indicating that a late fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century reader would recognize the same.[79] Some painted badges have irrefutable metal precedents; originally, scholars identified close to thirty-eight different pilgrimage sites in over 143 examples of painted pilgrims' badges, although, according to Kunera, these numbers have since increased to over 420 examples.[80] Certain geographic locales are favored, and their frequency parallels the popularity of the actual pilgrimage destinations and the wide distribution of badges from those sites. What is more, the popularity of certain painted badges mirrors similar souvenirs actually sewn into manuscripts.[81] The majority of painted badges represent

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fols. 29v/30r; and Parma, Biblioteca Palatina MS pal. 165, fols. 36v/37r, including similar badges depicting angels holding a chasse reliquary, a frontal enthroned Virgin and Child with Gothic portals with clear finials (indicative of a badge from Notre-Dame at Halle), the slightly skewed geometric forms of some of the badges (particularly octagonal-shaped badges), as well as the slight smiles on some of the figures. These manuscripts have all been associated with the Master of the David Scenes. Another stylistic grouping is apparent in the pilgrim badge margins of New York, Pierpont Morgan Library MS 52, fol. 353r, Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS IV 441, fol. 22r, and a book of hours from Cologne in a private collection, fol. 206r. For the latter, see Joachim M. Plotzek, *Andactsbücher des Mittelalters aus Privatbesitz* (Cologne, 1987), pp. 34, 206–208.

[79] Köster, "Gemalte Kollektionen" and "Religiöse Medaillen"; Jos Koldeweij, "'Tsente Thomaes te Cantelberghe: Pelgrimstochen vanuit de Nedelanden naar Canterbury: teruggevonden insignes en berichten uit andere bron" in *Heilig en Profaan 2*, pp. 100–102; Koldeweij, "Servatius in Veelvoud en Enkelvoud Maastrichtse Boekbanden, Miniaturen, Pelgrimstekens en Zegels," vol. 1, pp. 701–42. Given the later popularity of Flemish manuscripts in other regions of Europe, particularly Spain, it is unclear whether a painted badge collection featuring sites mostly from the Southern Netherlands and Germany would be of any significance to a book owner outside this region. Would they be able to recognize these pilgrimage sites and would they understand the significance of the holy destinations in these regions? Or could the manuscripts be used by their owners, some of whom had married into the Burgundian/Hapsburg family, as a "tutorial" of popular religious sites in the Low Countries? Such examples include books of hours made for Joanna of Castille, wife of Philip the Handsome (London, British Library Add. MS 18852; British Library Add. MS 35313 has also been linked with Joanna). Queen Isabella of Castile, Joanna's mother, also owned a book of hours with painted pilgrim badge borders (Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art MS 63.256).

[80] Koldeweij, "Medieval Pilgrim Badges Found in the Netherlands," pp. 43–46. Köster listed 146 examples of painted souvenirs in seventeen manuscripts. "Gemalte Kollektionen," pp. 524–525. Further additions to Köster's list were provided by Koldeweij in "Pilgrim Badges Painted in Manuscripts: A North Netherlandish Example," p. 212. For the most recent count of painted badges in illuminated manuscripts, see Kunera http://www.kunera.nl/.

[81] Connections between artists who painted pilgrim badge margins and their ties to the Burgundian library are somewhat unclear. It is known that Dreux Jean

pilgrimage sites primarily from Flanders, the most popular being St. Adrian at Geraardsbergen, Notre-Dame at Boulogne-sur-Mer, Notre Dame at Halle, and St. Josse-sur-Mer, among others.[82] From Germany, the sites often featured include the Holy Tunic at Aachen, the Three Kings in Cologne, and the Miraculous Host in Wilsnack. The main exception to this trend is the predominance of painted Holy Face badges, most commonly associated with Rome but also affiliated with several pilgrimage sites in Germany, such as the monastery of Wienhausen in Germany.[83]

Individual badges were sometimes depicted multiple times in a manuscript border. For example, book of hours now in Brussels

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who is linked to (Master of Girart of Roussillon) worked for Duke Philip the Good (and, later his son, Charles) and completed additions to The *Prayer Book of Philip the Bold* (Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS 11035–37 and Cambridge, Fitzwilliam MS 3–1954), which contained sewn metal pilgrims' badges and well as Vera Icons, though no painted pilgrim badge borders have been attributed to Dreux Jean. Few direct links can be made with artists whose workshops produced painted badge borders (The Master of the First Prayer Book of Maximilian, the Master of James IV of Scotland, the Master of the David Scenes, the Master of the Soane Hours, and Simon Bening) and the Burgundian court. However, the Master of the First Prayer Book of Maximilian (Alexander Bening?) executed a manuscript of the Life of St. Adrian of Geraardsbergen (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS s.n. 2619), made for King Louis XI of France, an exile in the Burgundian court in 1456. Its frontispiece depicts Louis and his wife Charlotte kneeling before the altar of St. Adrian, on which the badges of St. Adrian were modeled.

Several owners of manuscripts with painted badge borders had close ties to the Burgundian and Hapsburg courts and were members of the Order of the Golden Fleece, including Engelbert of Nassau, who became a knight in the Order during the reign of Emperor Maximilian I (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 219–20; this manuscript was later in the hands of Philip the Fair, Engelbert's liege); and Louis de Quarré, seigneur de La Haye and treasurer of the Order starting around 1484 (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 311).

[82] In an appendix in the article "Gemalte Kollektionen," pp. 524–25, Köster listed the frequency of pilgrimage sites represented in painted badges. Among the most frequently depicted in eighteen manuscripts were the Holy Face (twenty-eight times in ten manuscripts); Notre Dame at Halle (twenty-one times in nine manuscripts); St. Adrian at Geraardsbergen (eleven times in ten manuscripts); the scallop shell of Santiago de Compostela (fourteen times in four manuscripts); Our Lady of Walsingham (eleven times in nine manuscripts); Notre Dame at Boulogne-sur-Mer (nine times in eight manuscripts); St.-Josse-sur-Mer (eight times in five manuscripts); the Three Kings at Cologne (six times in five manuscripts); the Virgin's Tunic at Aachen (seven times in five manuscripts). Jos Koldeweij's totals in "Medieval Pilgrim Badges Found in the Netherlands" follow a similar trend, with the most popular pilgrims' badges being the Vera Icon, St. Adrian at Geraardsbergen, Notre-Dame at Halle, St. James at Santiago de Compostela, the Virgin at Boulogne-sur-Mer, St.-Josse-sur-Mer, and the Virgin at Aachen. See column C, p. 46.

[83] Hamburger, pp. 194–97.

(Bibliothèque Royale, MS IV 441, fol. 22r) contains at least five variously shaped badges of the Virgin and Child enthroned on a Gothic dais, referring to the pilgrims' badges from Notre Dame at Halle. (fig. 7.6) Other manuscripts contain numerous representations of badges of St. Adrian, the Holy Face, Notre Dame at Boulogne-sur-Mer, as well as multiple images of souvenirs lacking a clearly identifiable pilgrimage destination, such as the Crucifixion, the monogram of Christ (IHS), the dove of the Holy Spirit, casket or pyx reliquaries, and busts of unidentified saints.[84] Reproducing badge iconography undoubtedly was an expedient way for an artist to fill border space, but it could also allude to the practice of visiting a pilgrimage shrine on multiple occasions and acquiring multiple badges.

In certain painted badge margins, manuscript artists depicted the souvenirs with great detail and legibility, allowing many of the pilgrimage sites to be conclusively identified. For example, in the *Hours of Louis Quarré* (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 311, *c.* 1488), twenty-three badges—fourteen gold, eight silver, and one parchment or cloth vernicle—are represented in the lavender panel on the opening to the codex's Hours of the Holy Spirit (fol. 21v). (fig. 7.7) They include souvenirs of St. Adrian of Geraardsbergen, Notre Dame at Boulogne-sur-Mer, St. Servatius, St. Cornelius, St. Josse-sur-Mer, St. Dymphna at Gheel, the Three Kings at Cologne, and three badges of Notre Dame at Halle.[85]

Some manuscripts' reproductions of pilgrims' souvenirs are less defined, with more schematic iconographic detail, so they cannot be readily connected to a specific pilgrimage site. This is evident in a tiny book of hours in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (MS lat. 10555), from the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century.[86] (fig. 7.8) While several of the larger badges surrounding the miniature of St. Luke can be

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[84] Other generic painted badge iconography includes the Paschal Lamb, a five-petal flower, and a skull.

[85] Badges depicting the Crucifixion, the Annunciation, a pyx reliquary, and other saintly figures are also represented. Badges of the Annunciation have been associated with the Dutch pilgrimage at 's-Gravenzande.

[86] Although the book's owner is unknown, the Suffrage to St. Agnes on fol. 305r includes a full-page miniature of the saint depicted next to a kneeling female patron, identified in a prayer on fol. 271 as Ançola. Virginia Reinburg, "Hearing Lay People's Prayer," in eds. Barbara Diefendorf and Carla Hesse, *Culture and Identity in Early Modern Europe (1500–1800): Essays in Honor of Natalie Zemon Davis* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), p. 23. An unidentified coat of arms held by two angels also appears at the beginning of the codex, on fol. 1v.

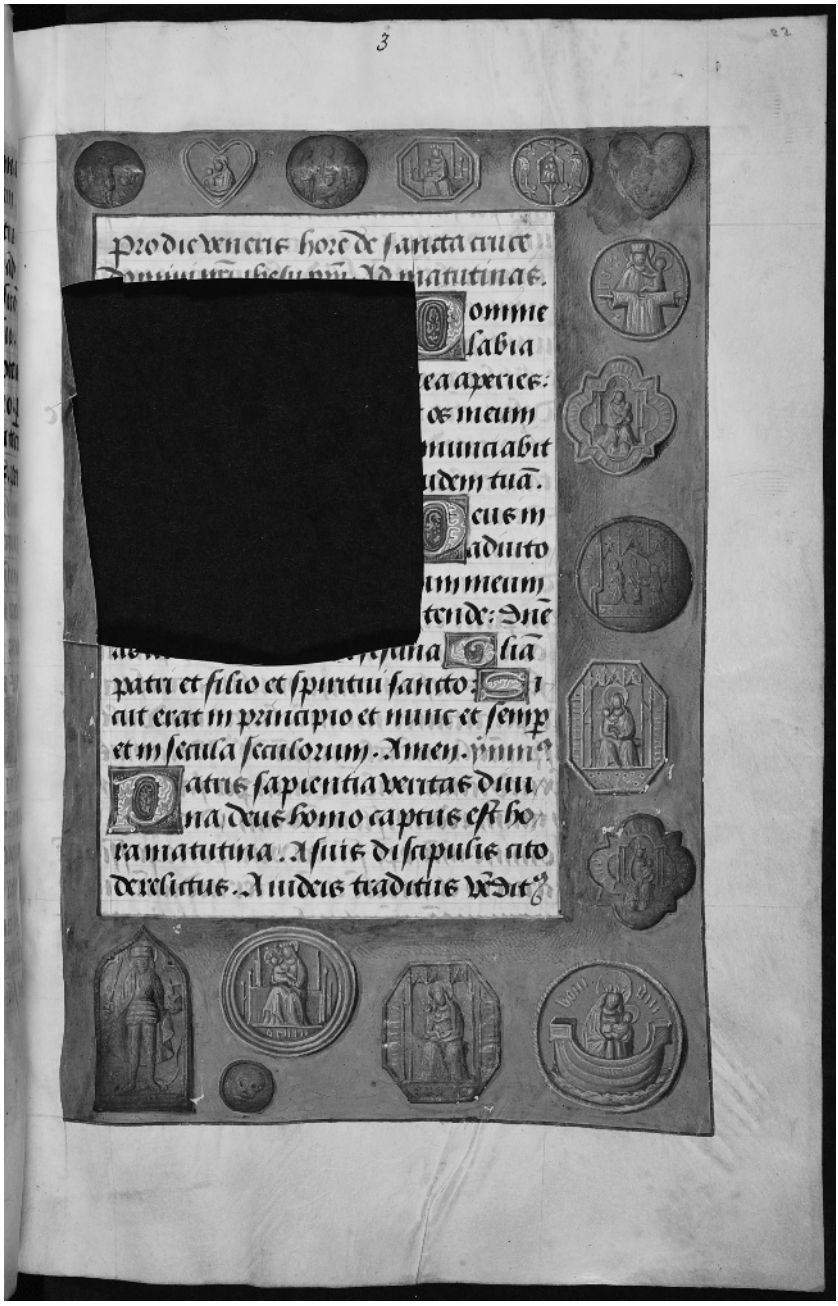

Fig. 7.6 Book of Hours, Brussels Bibliothèque Royale, MS IV 441 fol. 22r. Permission of the Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels.

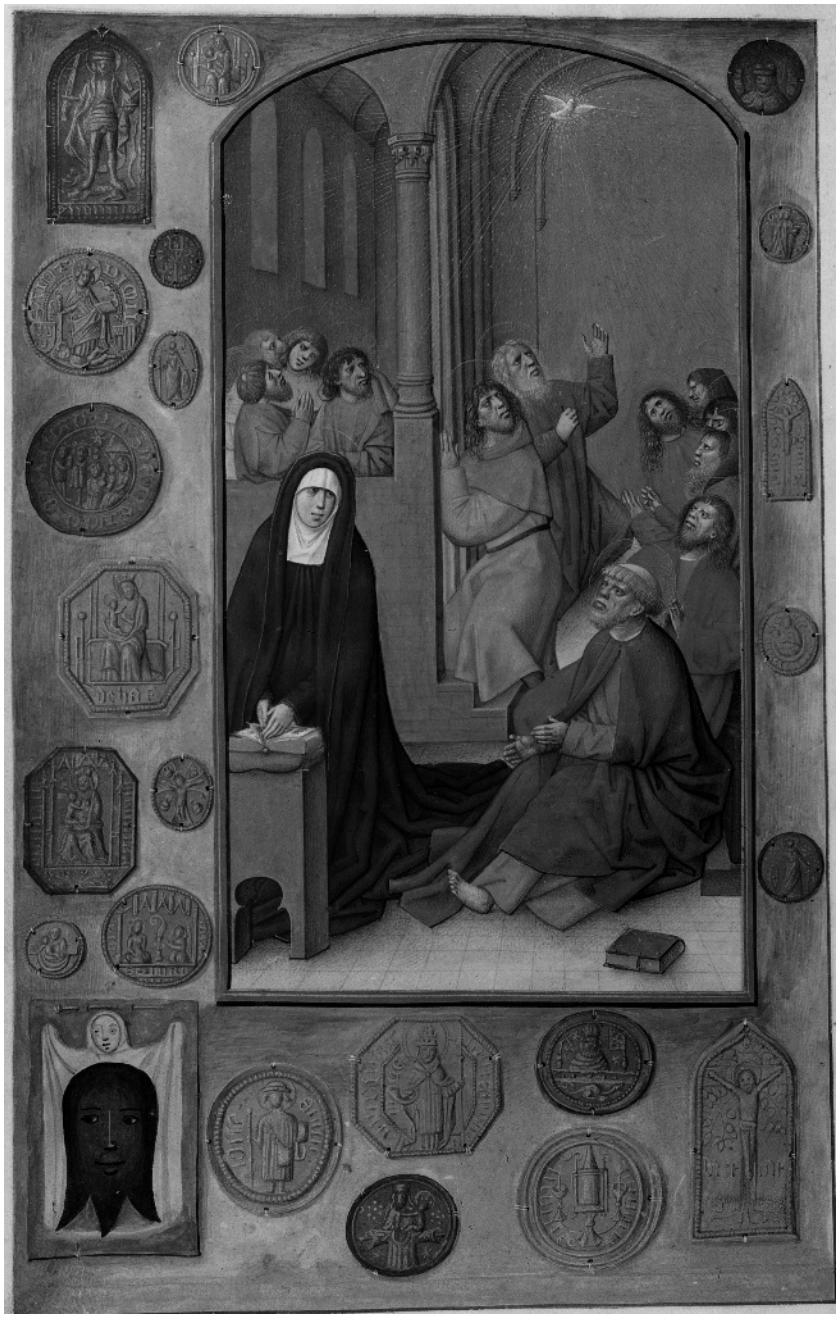

Fig. 7.7 Book of Hours of Louis Quarré, Oxford Bodleian Library, MS Douce 311 fol. 21v. Photo: permission of the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

Fig. 7.8 Book of Hours, Paris Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 10555, fol. 50r. Photo: permission of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

identified, including St. Adrian at Geraardsbergen, St. Quentin (in Picardy), St. Peter, St. Barbara, and the Virgin and Child on a crescent, the folio's small dimensions made it difficult for the manuscript artist to execute the fine details of the smaller badges. That, combined with the small sizes of the depicted badges and their darkening caused by the oxidization of the silver paint, makes many of them illegible.[87]

In these instances, often the shape of the badge's outline (for example, the rectangular base and ogee apex of the St. Adrian of Geraardsbergen badge) or vague similarities with recognized extant badges (for example, a badge consisting of three concentric circles, representing the Miraculous Host at Wilsnack, or the outstretched arms of a tunic, symbolizing the Virgin's holy relic kept at Aachen) provide the only clues as to the painted badge's provenance. Occasionally painted souvenirs are identifiable based on schematic attributes commonly associated

[87] Gold and silver paint were generally used to render the badges. At one time, the silver badges would have been shiny and brilliant, making the margins visually striking, allowing the reader to readily imagine the material worth of these "metal" badges.

with saintly figures: a tower for St. Barbara, a wheel for St. Catherine, a set of keys for St. Peter. Despite this, many painted badges are simply unidentifiable due to their common features, such as the bust of a tonsured monk or a mitred bishop.[88]

Painted marginal devotional souvenirs appear in a variety of textual and pictorial contexts within books of hours, ranging from the Hours of the Virgin and the Hours of the Holy Spirit, to the Gospel Lessons and Suffrages to the Saints (including those of James, Sebastian, and Christopher).[89] In these cases, it is often difficult to make any direct link between the pilgrim badge borders and the main text or illuminations they surround.[90]

In spite of the lack of correlation between pilgrim badges borders and the main text and illustrations, as well as the artists' use of model books and their tendency to copy, it is feasible that painted badges could be construed as devotional objects and used in the same way as actual badges. Each painted badge allowed the reader to go on an imaginative pilgrimage, serving as a memento of that pilgrimage for the book's owner.[91] By partaking in an imagined pilgrimage experience, those who chose not to, or were unable to go on pilgrimage could earn indulgences by undertaking a mental pilgrimage for their soul's salvation. With the badges' detailed iconography, the owners could mentally visit the shrines depicted, picturing themselves travelling along the route, visiting the church, and standing in the presence of the holy shrine. Later re-visitations within the pages of the book allowed the reader to recreate and re-imagine the events within the memory of the journey. For the book's owner, multiple depictions of a badge in a

[88] Recently, the pilgrim badge database Kunera has suggested that several of the mitred bishop badges may, in fact, represent St. Thomas Becket.

[89] As-Vijvers, "Marginal Meaning? The Interpretation of Ghent-Bruges Border Decoration," pp. 8–10. In some instances, the painted badge borders surround relevant illuminations and prayers, such as St. James (commonly associated with pilgrimage), and St. Christopher and the Flight into Egypt, both alluding to long journeys, though these account for only a half dozen of the forty-plus extant examples of painted badges. The iconography of miniatures surrounded by painted badges is varied, including the Virgin and Child, the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Prayer in the Garden of Gesthemane, the Mocking of Christ, the Descent of the Holy Spirit, and saints such as Sebastian, Andrew, and Luke.

[90] As-Vijvers suggests that painted pilgrims' badges should not be interpreted in relationship to their specific contexts, although their general religious meaning within the book of hours is certainly valid. "More than Marginal Meaning?," p. 10. The notable exception is the scallop shell border surrounding the Suffrage Prayers to St. James.

[91] Weekes, p. 183.

border might evoke repeated journeys to popular pilgrimage shrines for repeated entreaty to that saint, just as a pilgrim who visited a shrine several times may have acquired multiple badges from the same shrine in the manuscript.

These armchair pilgrims could also obtain some of the souvenirs' holy benefits, specifically their protective miraculous power.[92] In the owner's mind, painted souvenirs could protect the book, its contents, and the owner themselves from ills or difficulties, similar to real badges.[93] The badges also could allude to indulgenced pilgrimages, both those physically travelled as well as imagined religious journeys.[94] By the fifteenth century, various devotional devices, such as architectural models or painted plaques, were available to simulate the progression of an indulgenced pilgrimage without having to experience (or re-experience) the long travels.[95] Devotional texts also provided a reader the chance to spiritually travel to famed holy sites and gain indulgences.[96] In a similar manner, indulgenced pilgrimages such as those

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[92] Sheila Campbell coined the phrase "armchair pilgrim" describing a person participating in a mental pilgrimage instead of partaking on the physical journey in "Armchair Pilgrims: Ampullae from Aphrodisias," p. 545.

[93] This was suggested by Kaufmann and Kaufmann, p. 56. Andre Vauchez describes the automous thaumaturgical power of images—similar to the powers seen in relics—in which the owner placed the image on a diseased or damaged part of the body after invoking the same of the saint. *Sainthood and the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 452.

[94] Vida Hull discusses indulgences attached to spiritual pilgrimages in place of physical pilgrimages, specifically in reference to Hans Memling's panoramic paintings and the Bruges banker Tommaso Portinari, Vida J. Hull, "Spiritual Pilgrimage in the Paintings of Hans Memling," in eds. Blick and Tekippe, *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, p. 33. Kathryn Rudy mentions a German convent in the Bickencloister in Villingen, which used over one hundred painted plaques painted with famed pilgrimage sites in the Holy Land and Rome, many of which could earn indulgences by using them for imagined journeys. Similarly, nuns in Augsburg hung images of the Seven Principal Churches in Rome, for devotees could use instead of traveling the long distance to Rome in 1500, a Jubilee Year. "A Guide to Mental Pilgrimage," pp. 513–14.

[95] Some pilgrims returning to the Low Countries from the Holy Land recreated the landscape of the Holy Land with small-scale architectural models, or crosses and carvings, spaced at certain intervals in order to recreate the experience of the pilgrimage. Hull, p. 30.

[96] Kathryn Rudy describes a pilgrim's guide from the 1470s which lists important sites in the Holy Land where pilgrims received plenary indulgences. The book is meant for private devotion, entirely as a mental guide for pilgrimage. The book also contains other illuminations which could provide indulgences for the reader, including the vernicle (held by Veronica), the Arma Christi, and the Host-as-Relic. "A Guide to Mental Pilgrimage," pp. 494–515.

to the Holy Land, Rome, and Aachen could be mentally performed, with the "proof" of that internal journey—the painted badge—already present in the prayer book. Painted badges of the Vera Icon allude to various indulgences associated with the holy image: the depicted vernicle could certainly refer to the indulgenced pilgrimage to Rome to view the relic, yet it could also be used as an image for meditation while reciting the *Salve Sancta Facies* prayer, another means of lessening time in Purgatory. The viewer thus could "choose" the types of indulgences to be earned while contemplating the painted Vera Icon pilgrim badge.[97]

Just as actual badges were souvenirs of a pilgrimage journey or journeys, the painted pilgrim badges allowed readers to mentally create their own internal spiritual pilgrimage route. In some ways, these painted replicas provided an even greater pilgrimage range beyond the scope of a pilgrimage path.[98] When looked at as a group, many of the badges' shrines are spread over a wide geographic area. The *Hours of Louis Quarré*, for example, depicts sites ranging from Rome to Geraardsbergen to Aachen.[99] The reader thus could examine his

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[97] In at least one manuscript, Parma Biblioteca Palatina MS pal. 195, fols. 113v/114r, a border containing painted pilgrims' badges and a vernicle (along with a rosary and pearls) surrounds an illumination of the *Salvator mundi*. The Vera Icon is next to the illumination, providing a direct correlation between miniature and painted badge, although the accompanying English prayer is not the *Salve sancta facies*.

[98] Andre Vauchez, *Sainthood and the later Middle Ages*, pp. 448, 450 explores the dispersal of saintly images and its affect on the devotion to saints in the late Middle Ages. He argues that the spread of images was crucial in dissociating the cult of saints from pilgrimages to their shrines and tombs. Devotion to the saints "tended to be distanced from the cult of relics, even though a concrete topographical reference always persisted." In turn, "[i]mages of saints began to acquire an autonomy, and a mobility which made them prime instruments in the diffusion of their cults." Thus, devotees may not need to undertake a physical pilgrimage to a holy shrine in order to have a pious interest in a particular saint.

[99] This geographic range covered by the pilgrims' badges is comparable to the sacred topography in the Holy Land tableaus of Hans Memling. In turn, these compositions enabled their viewers to undertake a mental pilgrimage. Hull argues that Hans Memling's representations "engaged the mental and emotional participation of the devout viewer," p. 50. She describes Memling's paintings *The Passion of Christ* and *The Seven Joys of the Virgin* as a "single composition in a continuous, expansive space, combining many episodes of Christ's or the Virgin's life." These scenes add "a geographic and temporal breadth" to the spiritual pilgrimage. Traveling on a visual journey through time and space, the viewer goes back to the past to relive the journey with Christ or the Virgin through the episodes of their lives depicted in the paintings: "[e]ach event, isolated in its own space by landscape or architecture, could be a focus for meditation as the devout viewer becomes a witness to all the occurrences of Holy Week," p. 41. Hull also suggests that in the landscape, "the apparent reality of place

badge collection and imagine travelling great distances to visit some of the most popular shrines in Western Europe in the late Middle Ages. It is unlikely that one specific imagined pilgrimage route was devised for the owner's spiritual edification, although the reader could interpret the collection as an accumulation of multiple pilgrimages, as the *D'Oiselet Hours*' badges were for Claude de la Chambre.

Ultimately, the painted badges comprise a constructed pilgrimage because the artist or workshop chose which specific sites to illustrate. The repeated depictions of badges from popular sites in the southern Netherlands and Germany (and further afield in Rome) reinforced their popularity as pilgrimage sites. It became a best-of listing that pilgrims would likely recognize and perhaps wish to visit. Although they may not have the opportunity to partake in the physical journey to these sites, they could do so thanks to their book's marginal decoration. By contemplating a conventional collection of badges, readers could thus visualize themselves as part of a larger community of pilgrims partaking in shared mental pilgrimage, similar to an actual pilgrimage.

As later marginal painted badges become more indistinguishable, reduced to geometric shapes, a badge may have served as shorthand for any number of well-known sites and souvenirs, or simply a generic symbol for a pilgrim badge. This vague and rudimentary iconography ultimately allowed the reader to select a preferred pilgrimage site. In her analysis of early pilgrim ampullae with unidentifiable motifs, Sheila Campbell suggests that "the generic or non-specific nature of the iconography allows for a multiplicity of interpretations."[100] In turn, one could identify the image or figure depending on the attributes—martyr's palm, tonsure, bishop's mitre, etc.—as whichever saint or holy figure the reader wished. Hence, in the case of a badge depicting Christ or Mary, the patron could choose the Christological or Marian site they wished to visit on their mental pilgrimage. Moreover, the patron's choice of provenance for the painted badge could change each time the book is opened. The destination becomes open to interpretation, free from the constraints of geography, distance, time and money spent, or danger along the route.

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and movement, of an environment through which a visual traveler may pause or traverse, enhances the sense of pilgrimage, the journey from sacred site to site, following Christ's steps," p. 39.

[100] Sheila Campbell, p. 545.

In the end, the reader may not have considered it crucial or relevant to identify the specific saint or site each painted badge illustrated. Rather, the pilgrim badge collection itself and its symbolic value are most significant; the prayer book is simply the place for them to be stored.[101] Mary Carruthers observes that medieval trained memory could be seen as a storehouse, a treasure-chest, a vessel into which objects depicted in margins, such jewels, coins, flowers, fruits, and perhaps even pilgrim badges could be placed:

> They serve the basic function of all page decoration, to make each page memorable, but they also serve to remind readers of the purpose of books as a whole: that they contain matter to be laid away in their memorial storehouse [or] shrine…a task especially suitable in connection with the sorts of books these images most often accompany, [such as] Bibles [and] prayer books.[102]

The prayer book preserves the precious collection that may not have been physically gathered by the patron, but nonetheless is possessed by him or her within its pages. The margin of the page is the area that invites and gives scope to a reader's memory.[103]

Conclusion: Pages and Pilgrimages Traveled

Late medieval concern for more personalized religious experiences resulted in lay individuals finding new ways to partake in a larger process of practicing, exhibiting, and feeling devotion. That process often included the daily reading of prayers in prayer books such as a book of hours, especially those which encouraged the reader to recall significant Biblical narratives, to appeal to the saints, and to empathize with the emotions of Christ and the Virgin. Pilgrimage was yet another way to participate in the active devotion to Christ, the Virgin, and the saints; the pilgrim badge was a memento of that particular form of devotion.[104] Affixing the pilgrim badges within their books or

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[101] This is appropriate given the other precious marginal objects illustrated on other folia in these manuscripts, including rosaries, jewels, cameos, and flowers. In some manuscripts, such as Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS II 5941, fol. 95v, badges are depicted next to jewels and pearls. Challis, "Marginalized Jewels," pp. 253–89.

[102] Carruthers, *The Book of Memory*, pp. 246–47.

[103] Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought*, p. 161, suggests this in her analysis of the marginal decorations of the *Rutland Psalter* and the *Hours of Catherine Cleves*.

[104] Rudy, "Northern European Visual Responses to Holy Land Pilgrimage," p. 7.

painting images of them in their manuscripts' borders brought these two impulses together.

Whether they were actual artefacts or painted souvenirs, the inclusion of pilgrim badges in prayer books gave their owners an opportunity to recollect pilgrimage journeys, either through memory or imagination. As a repository to store these saintly images, the manuscript was also the instrument for public display or private meditation on the souvenirs.

Real or represented pilgrim badges clustered together on one or two folios concentrated their sacred efficacy in one portion of the book, allowing the patron the simultaneous benefits of internal voyage and spiritual contemplation of the saints and sites depicted. Badges interspersed throughout the manuscript allowed for multivalent forms of meditation between a souvenir and a specific text or image, be it recalling a pilgrimage journey while reading the manuscript, or finding visual and iconographic resonances between the badge and the book's contents. The spiritual and apotropaic efficacy of pilgrim badges in manuscripts could also be evoked or envisaged.

Whether remembering or imagining the experience of being at the pilgrimage locale, the reader could recollect the testament of faith made to undertake pilgrimage. Revisiting and re-experiencing in the manuscript continued to render the badges personal to the owner. The journey by means of pilgrim badges in devotional books was constructed by the owner *vis-à-vis* the prayers and images contained within. Readers could, in turn, create their own pilgrimage, each perhaps with a different spiritual path.

The pilgrimage path within the book, exemplified by the badges, transcended linear, temporal, and geographical routes. A new pilgrimage itinerary was created which could be revisited through reading the prayer book, according to the pilgrim's particular spiritual needs or level of importance. While turning through the manuscript's pages, the reader experienced another pilgrimage journey through reencountering the badges and remembering the experience of acquiring the badge or badges. The presence of pilgrim badges in devotional manuscripts provides the memory of past pilgrimage within the matrix of present devotional practice and opens up an avenue for future salvation.

PART III

INDULGENCES AND INTERACTIVITY

8. PRAYERS AND PROMISES: THE INTERACTIVE INDULGENCE PRINT IN THE LATER MIDDLE AGES

Walter S. Gibson

Among the types of devotional images that appeared in great quantities in the later Middle Ages, one of the most popular was the indulgence print. Its nature can be judged from the three examples described here. A woodcut of undetermined origin, made about 1450, shows the isolated figure of Christ on the Cross, supplemented by the application of red paint to indicate the blood spurting from his side wound and flowing copiously elsewhere from his body.[1] (fig. 8.1) Inscribed *Ecce Homo*, it is accompanied by a long text cut into the block containing a prayer to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the promise of an indulgence of 80,000 years to anyone who reads this prayer. A second woodcut, made in Augsburg around 1480, (fig. 8.2) depicts a variant of the *Virgo in Sole* ("Virgin in the Sun"), in this case the Virgin holding the Child on a crescent moon enclosed in a radiating glory; the text inscribed at the right contains a message purportedly from Pope Sixtus IV granting an indulgence of 1,000 years to those who recite the accompanying prayer to the Virgin.[2] The final example is an engraving executed around 1480–85 by Israhel van Meckenem representing a *Mass of St. Gregory*. (fig. 8.3) The Latin inscription engraved below the image explains that "whoever recites in the presence of the arms of Christ the Apostles' Creed, the Pasternoster, and the Ave Maria, and as often as he does so, shall be pardoned 20,000 years of punishment in purgatory."[3]

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[1] Cambridge, University Library, MS. Add. 5944 (11); Cambridge, The Fitzwilliam Museum: *Splendours of Flanders: Late Medieval Art in Cambridge Collections*, cat. by Alain Arnould and Jean Michel Massing, (1993), pp. 160–61, cat. no. 53, col ill. on p. 185. I am much indebted to Diane Scillia who very generously made available to me her own extensive material on indulgence prints and offered many valuable comments on an earlier draft of this essay.

[2] *Fifteenth Century Engravings of Northern Europe*. Catalog by Alan Shestack, Ex. Cat. (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1967–1968), cat. no. 163. Hereafter *Fifteenth Century Engravings* (1967–68).

[3] *Ibid*., cat. no. 215.

Fig. 8.1 *Christ on the Cross*, *c.* 1450, woodcut. Photo: Cambridge, University Library, MS. Add. 5944 (11).

Vnser heiliger vater pabst
Sixtus der vierdt hat allen
den die se ſund berewt vnd
gebeicht haben vnd das nach
volgend gebet andechticlich
ſprechen geben xj tauſent
jar von wirem ablas als
offt ſy das ſprechen. Das hat
Er in ſeiner krankhait gemacht vnd geſetzt :—
Gegrüſt ſeiſt du allerhaligiſte maria
Du muter gottes. Du küngin des himels
Du porten des paradiſes. Du aingeſtaw
der welt. Du biſt am vainer ſunderſtaw. Du
haſt empfangen Jheſum on ſünd. Du
haſt geporen den Schöpffer vnd hailmach
er der welt daran ich nit zweifel. Erlöſ
mich von allem übel. Vnd bit für mein
ſünd. Amen. Tain Aue maria :>

Fig. 8.2 *Virgo in Sole*, woodcut. Augsburg, *c.* 1480. Photo: Washington, National Gallery of Art.

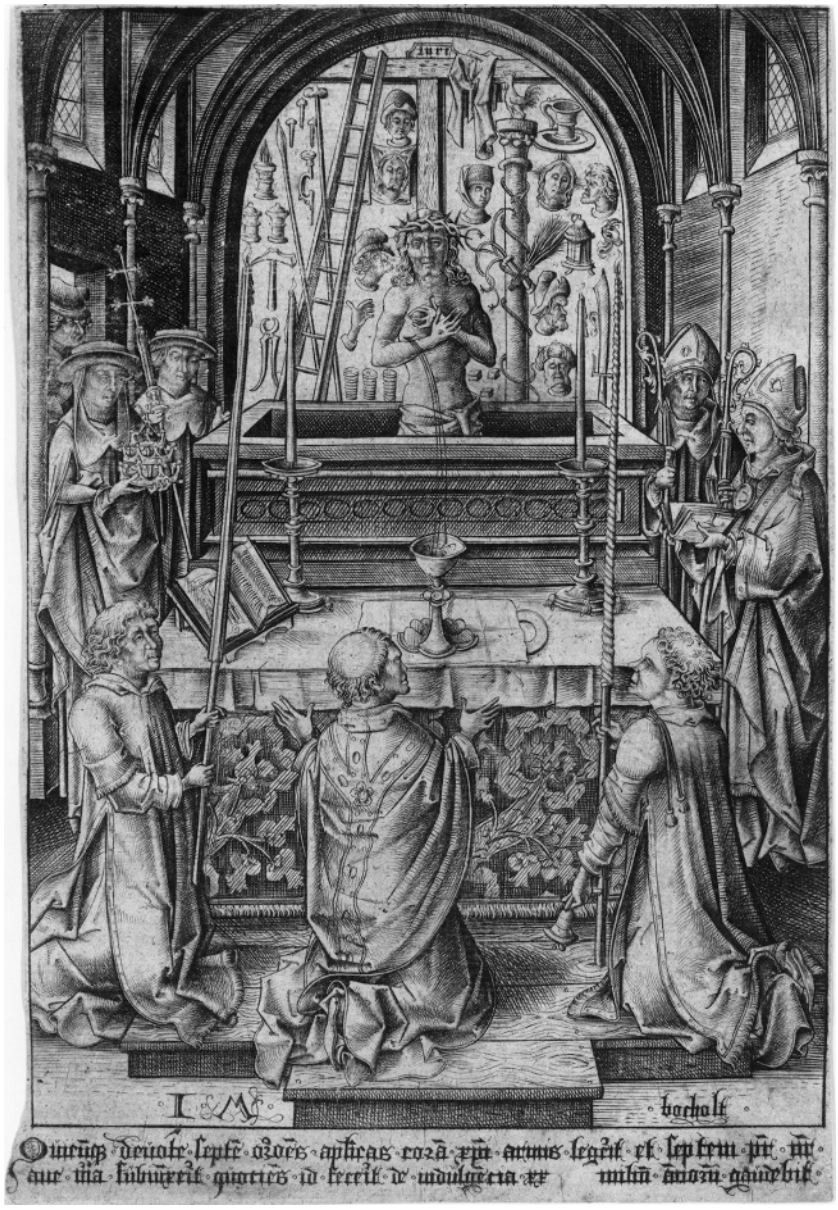

Fig. 8.3 Israhel van Meckenem, *Mass of St. Gregory*, engraving. Photo: Washington, National Gallery of Art.

As these three examples demonstrate, indulgence prints ranged in quality from simple, often crude woodcuts to beautifully engraved prints by such masters as Van Meckenem. Surviving in a fairly large numbers, although often in only few impressions of each print, especially in the case of woodcuts, and despite their diversity of style and subject matter, these prints have one feature in common: they all promise an important spiritual benefit. The precise nature of this benefit is spelled out on Van Meckenem's print (fig. 8.3) in the phrase: "shall be pardoned 20,000 years of punishment in Purgatory." In other words, in exchange for the recitation of certain prayers and occasionally other texts frequently stipulated to be made in the presence of the depicted image itself, the indulgence print promises to reduce the amount of time to be spent in Purgatory by the person reciting them. And in their exchange of prayers and promises, these prints offer us a vivid insight into the late-medieval economy of salvation.

It has been justly said that by the later Middle Ages, "properly shriven and penitent, the Christian might rest assured that he or she could not be damned."[4] And while the successful transition from this life to the next, negotiated in accordance to the procedures laid down in the *Ars Moriendi* (i.e. Art of Dying),[5] ensured that the average Christian would escape the eternal pains of Hell, only the most saintly souls, always few in number, would be immediately admitted into the equally eternal joys of Paradise. The souls of those who had been "not entirely good, but not entirely bad," as medieval writers expressed it,[6] faced a stint in Purgatory. This was especially the fate of all those who at death had not completed the penance, or "satisfaction," that had been assigned to them by a priest after confessing their sins, including the

[4] Clive Burgess, "'Longing to be Prayed for': Death and Commemoration in an English Parish in the later Middle Ages," in *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, eds. Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 44–65, esp. p. 49.

[5] The literature on the *Ars Moriendi* is extensive, but see Emile Mâle, *Religious Art in France: The Late Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 348–355; Mary Catharine O'Connor, *The Art of Dying Well: The Development of the Ars moriendi* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942); and Clifton Cooper Olds, "Ars Moriendi: A Study of the form and Content of Fifteenth-Century Illustrations of the Art of Dying, (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1966).

[6] This characterization goes back to Augustine's *City of God*; see Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, trans, Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 69, 144, 147, 148, *passim*.

sins confessed on their deathbed.[7] Only when they were thus purged of the last stain of sin could these "Poor Souls," a name often given them, enter the presence of God.[8] And even for particularly egregious sinners, this stint in Purgatory would finally end with the Second Coming of Christ and the Last Judgment. But even so, a sojourn in Purgatory was hardly a prospect that the medieval faithful faced with equanimity, and with good reason. While some theologians and religious poets, among them Dante in his *Commedia Divina*, envisioned Purgatory as a forecourt of Heaven whose chief torment was a delay in seeing the face of God, majority opinion held that except in duration, Purgatory was an antechamber of Hell, with which it had much in common, and the excruciating torments of Hell had long been exhaustively and repeatedly described in accounts of visions of the afterlife, as well as in innumerable sermons and moral treatises.[9] The damned were plunged into burning lakes or ice-cold water, sometimes in rapid succession, roasted in fiery ovens, fried and boiled, hammered on anvils, dismembered, set upon by toads and snakes, or compelled to feast on similar disgusting creatures, and chewed up, digested, and evacuated by an assortment of loathsome monsters.[10] If this was the ordeal that any but the most saintly could hope for, it was no wonder, as Richard Southern once remarked, "the dying were no longer overpowered by

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[7] For confession and penance in the Middle Ages, see John T. McNeill and Helena M. Gamer, *Medieval Handbooks of Penance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938; repr. 1965); Thomas N. Tentler, *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977) and Julie Paulson, "A Theater of the Soul's Interior: Contemplative Literature and Penitential Education in the Morality Play *Wisdom*," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38/2 (Spring 2008), pp. 253–283.

[8] The classic study of Purgatory is Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, trans, Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984). See also the critical discussions of this book by Robert Southern in the *Times Literary Supplement* (18 June 1982), pp. 651–652; Graham Robert Edwards, "Purgatory: 'Birth or Evolution," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 36/2 (October 1985), pp. 634–646; and Aron Gurevich, "Popular and scholarly medieval cultural traditions: notes in the margin of Jacques Le Goff's book," *Journal of Medieval History*, 9 (1983), pp. 71–90.

[9] For these two views of Purgatory, see Robert W. Shaffern, *The Penitent's Treasury: Indulgences in Latin Christendom, 1175–1375* (Scanton: University of Scanton Press, 2007), pp. 117–123.

[10] Descriptions of Hell are too numerous to list here, but some idea of its punishments can be gained from Dante's *Inferno* as well as from the visions described in Eileen Gardiner, ed., *Visions of Heaven and Hell before Dante* (New York: Italica Press, 1989).

the fear of hell as they had once been. Instead they trembled at the prospect of prolonged purgatorial pains…"[11]

Nevertheless, the Church offered various means by which the suffering of the Poor Souls could effectively be alleviated and shortened in duration by certain actions performed not only by the living in anticipation of their death, but also by the family and friends of the deceased and by the faithful in general: these included paying for masses of the dead, giving alms, and offering prayers on behalf of the departed.[12] Just how such actions assisted the Poor Souls is strikingly depicted on two sides of an altar wing painted in Regensburg around 1480.[13] (figs. 8.4, 8.5) One side of the panel shows the faithful attending a mass (which they perhaps have paid for) and distributing alms to the poor. On the other side, the Poor Souls are comforted by angels, and several are being rescued from their purgatorial torments by angels and borne to Heaven.

The time spent in Purgatory could also be reduced by means of indulgences. This subject has received considerable attention in recent years, but a brief review of its main features will help us to understand the function of indulgence prints. According to the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, an indulgence is the remission of temporal punishment due to sin "through the application of the superabundant merits of Christ and the saints."[14] That is, the indulgence is a "draft" on the "Treasury of Merit," a treasure amassed by Christ through his Passion and death,[15] augmented by the merits acquired by the Virgin, as well as

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[11] Robert W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1970), p. 291.

[12] Prayers and other suffrages for the dead had appeared fairly early in the Middle Ages; see, for example, Megan McLaughlin, *Consorting with Saints: Prayer for the Dead in Early Medieval France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994). Only gradually, however, did they become codified in the form we encounter them from the fourteenth century on.

[13] Suffrages to aid the souls in Purgatory are concisely discussed, with further references, in Burgess, pp. 48–50; Laura Gelfand and Walter S. Gibson, "Surrogate Selves: The Devotional Portrait in the Late Middle Ages," *Simiolus*, 29, no. 3/4 (2002), pp. 124–126. For the Regensburg altarpiece, see Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland* (1983), pp. 44–45, cat. no. 41, with further literature.

[14] W.H. Kent, "Indulgences," in *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1907–14), vol. 7, pp. 783–788.

[15] As the Dominican preacher Giles of Orleans explained in a sermon of 1273, Christ's Passion constitutes a treasure from which priests draw indulgences; see Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200–1565* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), p. 118.

Fig. 8.4 *Suffrages*, altar wing, recto. Regensburg, *c.* 1480. Photo: Regensburg, Museum der Stadt Regensburg.

Fig. 8.5 *Souls in Purgatory*, altar wing, verso. Regensburg around 1480. Photo: Regensburg, Museum der Stadt Regensburg.

by the martyrs and the saints beyond what they need to gain Heaven. Empowered by the "Power of the Keys" that Christ conferred on St. Peter, as recorded in Matthew 16: 19—"And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven,"[16] the Church draws upon the Treasury of Merit for the benefit of the truly penitent faithful, in effect remitting some or all of the penalties that the they must pay in this life or in purgatory for their sins.[17]

While indulgences originally dealt with the ecclesiastical penalties levied on penitents in this life, they gradually came to apply chiefly to the punishment endured after death.[18] Varying in the days or years of remission promised, indulgences were traditionally granted by the Pope and his bishops, although only the Pope could grant a plenary indulgence, that is, a full remission of punishment in Purgatory.[19] From the late twelfth century on, indulgences had been available to the living to alleviate their postmortem punishment, at first granted chiefly to those who fought in the Crusades. Indulgences for people who had already died, however, apparently became common only after 1476, when Pope Sixtus IV declared that plenary indulgences could be applied by the living to their deceased family members and friends,[20] a circumstance, incidentally, that may at least partly account

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[16] Cf. Matthew: 18:18: "Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven." See the article by G.H. Joyce, "Keys, Power of the," in *Catholic Encyclopedia* 1907–14, vol. 8, pp. 631–633.

[17] An extensive discussion of the Treasury of Merit and its development appears in Shaffern, pp. 79–113.

[18] The fullest study of indulgences is still Henry Charles Lea, *A History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church* (Philadelphia: Lea Brothers & Co., 1896), vol. 3, although outmoded. More valuable are Robert W. Shaffern, *The Penitent's Treasury: Indulgences in Latin Christendom, 1175–1375* and R.N. Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England: Passports to Paradise?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), both of which incorporate much recent scholarship; although Swanson is concerned mainly with England, he offers much material on indulgences on the Continent. Useful summaries can be found in Southern (1970), pp. 166–173; Jonathan Sumption, *Pilgrimage: An Image of Mediaeval Religion* (Totowa, NJ: Rowan and Littlefield, 1975), pp. 141–145, 295–296; and Nina Miedema, "Following in the Footsteps of Christ: Pilgrimage and Passion Devotion," in eds. A.A. MacDonald, H.N.B. Ridderbos, R.M. Schlusemann, *The Broken Body. Passion Devotion in Late-Medieval Culture* (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998), pp. 73–76.

[19] For a discussion of the various types of indulgences, see Kent in *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1907–14), vol. 7, pp. 783–784.

[20] For indulgences for the dead, see Lea, 3, pp. 336–49; and Sumption, pp. 295–299.

for the many indulgences attributed to Sixtus IV on a number of prints issued after this date, such as the Augsburg woodcut discussed above. (fig. 8.2) Although Sixtus's action and his theological justification for it were vigorously disputed by churchmen,[21] Innocent VIII extended this indulgence to raise money for various campaigns against Turkish depredations in the Mediterranean, and further indulgences for the dead were authorized by Alexander VI for pilgrims to Rome during the Jubilee Year of 1500.[22]

Thus indulgences could be obtained by the faithful in exchange for pious works, such as cash donations for the Crusades or other military expeditions supported by the Church, for the construction or repair of churches,[23] and for even such secular enterprises as bridges and the like.[24] Indulgences were also granted to encourage pilgrimages to various sacred places, such as Santiago de Compostela, the shrine of St. Thomas Becket at Canterbury in England, and Giotto's Arena Chapel in Padua.[25] Pilgrims also flocked to visit the "Seven Principal Churches" of Rome, whose indulgenced altars yielded a bountiful

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[21] See Lea, 3, pp. 345–349, for Sixtus IV and the controversies occasioned by his several indulgences benefiting the dead. One response to Sixtus's proclamation is discussed by Heiko Augustinus Oberman, *The Harvest of Medieval Theology: Gabriel Biel and Late Medieval Nominalism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), pp. 404–406. At first Biel claimed that the jurisdiction of the pope was limited to the living; he later amended this opinion, saying that the pope could liberate only those souls of the deceased "for whom a work of piety has been performed" (p. 405). For the ecclesiastical distinction between indulgences for the living and those for the dead, see Kent in *Catholic Encyclopedia* (1907–1914), vol. 7, p. 784.

[22] Lea, 3, pp. 350–351. If the soul for whom the indulgences were obtained was already in Heaven or Hell, it was commonly assumed that the indulgences, and suffrages in general, benefited the next of kin qualified to receive their benefits; see, for example, Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c. 1400–c. 1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press 1992), p. 354.

[23] A good example is the reconstruction of the Cathedral of Troyes, which was financed by a series of indulgences issued in the thirteenth century; see Patrick J. Geary, *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), pp. 237–238.

[24] Indulgences granted in exchange for contributions to a wide range of ecclesiastical and secular projects are discussed Swanson, pp. 23–76, in a chapter titled "Pardons for every occasion."

[25] For indulgences available at Canterbury and other English shrines, see Ben Nilson, *Cathedral Shrines of Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1998), pp. 24–25, 110–111. For the Arena Chapel indulgence, see James H. Stubblebine, *Giotto: The Arena Chapel Frescoes* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1969), p. 105. Finally, Swanson refers frequently to the indulgences available at Santiago de Compostela; see index under "Compostela."

harvest of indulgences, especially during a Jubilee year.[26] But the most fruitful source of pilgrims' indulgences was the Holy Land,[27] as we learn, for example, from the German knight Konrad Grünemberg who made a pilgrimage to the East in 1486. In the journal kept on his travels, Grünemberg assiduously recorded the numerous indulgences that he garnered through his visits to the various holy sites, marking each place with a **T** or a Maltese Cross (✠), the traditional emblem worn by pilgrims to the Holy Land. These sites included not only such major places as Golgotha and the Holy Sepulcher (the latter site, in fact, yielding four indulgences), but also such places as the house of Simon the Leper, where Christ forgave Mary Magdalene her sins, and the Golden Gate through which Christ entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.[28]

The traffic in indulgences sponsored by the Church was frequently criticized. Perhaps the best known is Luther's condemnation of the indulgence proclaimed by Pope Julius II to raise money for the rebuilding of St. Peter's in Rome,[29] but over a century before, Chaucer had poked fun at unauthorized "pardoners," that is, sellers of indulgences, in his *Canterbury Tales*,[30] and later, sometime around 1450, Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa, then Apostolic Legate to Germany, complained that some preachers wrongly claimed that the indulgences they hawked released the faithful not only from the punishment of sin but from its guilt as well.[31] Indeed, the indulgence preacher was often heartily

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[26] Lea, 3, pp. 447–459; Sumption, pp. 231–256.

[27] See Miedema 1998, and Kathryn M. Rudy, "A Guide To Mental Pilgrimage: Paris, BibliothΠque de L'Arsenal Ms. 212," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 63 (2000), pp. 494–515. Hereafter Rudy, "Guide."

[28] *Ritter Grünembergs Pilgerfahrt ins Heilige Land 1486*, ed. and trans. Johann Goldfriedrich and Walter Fränzel (Leipzig: R. Voigtlander, n.d. [*c.* 1912]), pp. 79–98. For a list of the indulgenced sites in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Bethany, and the River Jordan, see Rudy, "Guide," pp. 494–496. These indulgences were issued without papal authority by the Franciscans, who not only served as custodians for the Latin Quarter of Jerusalem, but also as guides for the pilgrims to the Holy Land. Rudy, "Guide," p. 494.

[29] For a brief survey of the attacks of the Protestant reformers against indulgences, see Tentler, *Sin and Confession*, pp. 349–363. A vivid picture of the often profane goals for which indulgences were issued in the late Middle Ages is offered by Reinhold Kiermayr, "How Much Money was Actually in the Indulgence Chest?," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 17/3 (Fall 1986), pp. 303–318.

[30] See *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd ed., ed. Larry D. Benson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1987), pp. 34–35 (General Prologue), pp. 194–196 (Prologue to the Pardoner's Tale).

[31] Attributing this error to a misunderstanding of the words *a poena et a culpa*; Cusa condemned it at the Council of Magdeburg. See Kent in *Catholic Encyclopedia* 1907–1914, 7, p. 787. See further *ibid.*, p. 783, where the true meaning of this formula

condemned and local church authorities sought to control his activities, and around 1500 the French preacher Jean Vitrier went so far as to declare that indulgences came straight from Hell.[32] Despite such frequent and often violent objections, indulgences continued to be very popular both with the Church and with the faithful. If the Church found indulgences a vital source of its income,[33] the faithful found their promise of early release from Purgatory indispensable in planning for the contingencies they expected to encounter in the afterlife.

The wealthy, of course, had many means of shortening their sufferings in Purgatory, not only through pilgrimages, but also through bequests of money to fund multiple postmortem masses. Even better, they could endow permanent chantries whose priests would say masses for their souls in perpetuity, and these "perpetual chantries" were often associated with the family chapels and elaborate tombs that served to remind beholders to pray for the postmortem salvation of those buried there.[34] In the case of the poor, however, who could ill afford such enterprises, they had to rely for significant postmortem relief mainly on the Feast of All Souls (2 November), which the Church had designated for the saying of requiem masses for all

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is explained, noting that the indulgence "is not the forgiveness of the guilt of sin; it supposes that the sin has already been forgiven." Shaffern, pp. 145–58, notes that the Franciscans were also charged with preaching indulgences with remission *a pena et a culpa*, but goes on to say that the term did not actually mean what critics assumed it meant. Other recurring and wide-ranging controversies concerning indulgences before the Great Schism are discussed at length in Shaffern, pp. 159–210, while Swanson, pp. 278–348, surveys medieval indulgence controversies in general, especially in England.

[32] Larissa Taylor, *Soldiers of Christ: Preaching in Late Medieval and Reformation France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 182–183. For other condemnations of indulgences and indulgence-sellers, see *ibid*., pp. 19, 95, 123, 132.

[33] The role of indulgences in the economy of the Church is examined in Robert B. Ekelund, Jr., Robert F. Hébert, Robert D. Tollison, Gary M. Anderson, and Audrey B. Davidson, *Sacred Trust: The Medieval Church as an Economic Firm* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 33 passim, esp. pp. 161–163. Still valuable is Nikolaus Paulus, *Indulgences as Social Factor in the Middle Ages*, trans. J. Elliot Ross, foreword Eugene C. Barker (New York: Devin-Adair Company, 1922). For the increasing cost of obtaining papal indulgences, see Nilson, p. 179.

[34] K.L. Wood-Legh, *Perpetual Chantries in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965); Gelfand and Gibson, pp. 124–125. In the Netherlands, a chantry of this type was called a *kapelanie* or *vicarie*. Netherlandish testaments often stipulated that masses be said for the deceased *ten eeuwigen dage*, that is, "to all eternity;" see Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent, *Leven na de dood: Genken in de late Middeleeuwen*, catalogue by Truus van Bueren with contributions by W.C.M. Wüstefeld (1999), pp. 241–242.

the Poor Souls in Purgatory, regardless of financial status.[35] But by the later Middle Ages it was also possible to accumulate indulgences without making the arduous journey to Rome or the Holy Land,[36] or spending money for their acquisition by means of pious donations. Indeed, indulgences could be gained with little or no material outlay at all, merely by repeating certain prayers in the privacy of one's own home, and indulgenced prayers were often included in that most private of devotional texts, the book of hours, not infrequently with an indication of the years of punishment remitted with each recitation.[37] Such prayers, as one late medieval writer expressed it, enabled the poor to become "the equals of the rich."[38]

The favorite prayers were the Paternoster and the Ave Maria, the two prayers that every Christian was expected to know,[39] and indeed their recitation had long been assigned by priests to penitents after

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[35] See Francis Mershman, "All Souls Day," in *Catholic Encyclopedia* 1907–1914, 1, pp. 315–316. Some founders of perpetual chantries also provided masses for those Poor Souls who had no one especially appointed to pray for them; for several instances, see Wood-Legh, p. 310.

[36] Toward the end of the Middle Ages, the faithful were offered the possibility of making "spiritual pilgrimages," that is, of engaging in the appropriate meditations and prayers in designated churches closer to home, or before depictions of the sacred sites in paintings and manuscript illuminations. This subject is too broad to treat here in depth, but for "pilgrimage" manuscripts, see Rudy, "Guide" and Kathryn M. Rudy, "A Pilgrim's Book of Hours: Stockholm Royal Library A233," *Studies in Iconography* 21 (2000), pp. 237–279; and *ibid*., "Fragments of a Mental Journey to a Passion Park," in *Tributes in Honor of James H. Marrow*, pp. 405–419. An example of a printed pilgrimage book (Antwerp, 1521) is discussed in J.D. Bangs, *Cornelis Engebrechtsz.'s Leiden: Studies in Cultural History* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1979), pp. 58–67, esp. pp. 59–64. For panel paintings, see H.L.M. Defoer, "Een laat-gotisch schilderijtje met Sint-Jan voor het verdienen van de aflaten van de zeven hoofdkerken van Rome," *Antiek* 16 (1981), pp. 316–320. See also Henri Defoer, "Images as Aids for Earning the Indulgences of Rome," in *Tributes in Honor of James H. Marrow. Studies in Painting and Manuscript Illumination of the Late Middle Ages and Northern Renaisance*, ed. Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Anne S. Korteweg (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), pp. 163–171.

[37] In addition to the English examples cited below, see also several French books of hours described by Victor Leroquais, *Les livres d'heures manuscrits de la BibliothΠque Nationale*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1927), 1, pp. 299, 336; 2, p. 32.

[38] Jakob Sprenger, in his German statutes of the rosary brotherhood, 1476, cited in Anne Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose. The Making of the Rosary in the Middle Ages*. (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997), p. 137.

[39] The Pater Noster and Ave Maria were "ones which virtually everyone would know because their recitation was tested during the annual confessional process" (Swanson, p. 245). They are in fact, the most common prayers stipulated in the numerous indulgences discussed throughout Swanson's book. In a thirteenth-century book of daily devotions for anchorites, readers are counseled that "whoever does not know other matins may say thirty *Our Fathers* and *Hail Mary*" after each section; see *Ancrene Riwle. Introduction and Part I*, ed. and trans. by Roger W. Ackerman

confession as a penance.[40] The Ave Maria was especially popular, often earning rich spiritual returns for those who prayed it.[41] One example occurs as a Middle English Marian lyric, a variant of the Ave Maria, which concludes with the promise that all who greet the Virgin without deadly sin, "Forty days of pardoun God graunt hym."[42] Another indulgenced prayer was the *Obsecro te* ("I beseech you"), asking for the Virgin's intercession at the moment of death, that occurs in the Little Office (*Officium Parvum*) of the Blessed Virgin, often at the beginning, in medieval books of hours.[43] In the English printed hours, this prayer is often prefaced by a rubric in English assuring readers that whoever "that be in a state of grace that daily say devoutly this prayer," among other benefits "shall obteyne v hundred yeres & soo many lentes [a period of forty days] of pardon graunted by the v [i.e: five] holy fathers popes of Rome."[44] Even more generous is the sequence of Passion prayers known as the "Fifteen Oes," supposedly revealed by Christ to St. Bridget of Sweden, that carried the promise that its recitation every day for a year would release fifteen of the devotee's relatives from Purgatory; moreover, each recitation of the prayer would earn forty days of pardon, and ensure that those in danger of Hell would go to Purgatory instead, and those destined for Purgatory would suffer only the pains of this life before their admission into Heaven.[45]

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and Roger Dahood. (Binghamston: Medieval & Renaissance Texts and Studies, 1984), p. 77, lines 28–30.

[40] This topic deserves further research, but see Winston-Allen, pp. 1, 67, 68, 147; Ann Eljenholm Nichols, *Seeable Signs: The iconography of the Seven Sacraments 1350–1544* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1994), pp. 237–238.

[41] Indeed, we have no more powerful advocate than the Virgin Mary, whose help can be obtained for as little effort than "an Ave-Marie or tweye;" according to Chaucer in his "An ABC;" see *The Riverside Chaucer* (1987), p. 639, lines 100–104.

[42] Karen Saupe, ed., *Middle English Marian Lyrics*.(Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 1998), p. 120, no. 58.

[43] For an analysis of this prayer, see Roger S. Wieck, *Time Sanctified. The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life*. With essays by Lawrence P. Roos, Virginia Reinburg, and John Plummer (New York: The Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, 1988), pp. 94–96; and Roger S. Wieck, *Painted Prayers: The Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York: The Pierpont Morgan Library, 1997), pp. 86–87.

[44] Duffy, p. 262; see pp. 262–264 for an analysis of the prayer's contents. The *lentes* or *quadragesima* mentioned in various indulgences are terms recalling the forty-day fasts of the earlier penitentials; see Swanson, pp. 16, 344–345.

[45] *Ibid*., pp. 254–255; for the attribution to St. Bridget, see p. 72. The texts of the prayers are given in Charity Scott–Stokes, *Women's Books of Hours in Medieval England: Selected Texts Translated from Latin, Anglo-Norman French, and Middle English with Introduction and Interpretative Essay* (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2006), pp. 68–73, no. 9.1.

Indulgenced prayers and other texts were frequently attached to religious images. Possibly the earliest instance comes from the beginning of the thirteenth century, when Pope Innocent III granted ten days indulgence to those who recited a certain prayer and psalm to the *Vera icon* ("true image" of Christ, or "Holy Face") that was preserved in St. Peter's, Rome, and of which more later.[46] Innocent IV later attached a forty-day indulgence to the hymn *Ave Facies Praeclara* ("Hail Beautiful Face"); in the fourteenth century, John XXII is supposed to have granted 10,000 years for reciting the rhymed prayer *Salve Sancta Facies* ("Hail Holy Face") before an image of the *Vera icon*.[47] As scholars have frequently noted, many of these indulgences were undoubtedly spurious, especially those attributed to popes and bishops of earlier centuries, incidentally including even St. Peter,[48] but apparently the medieval faithful were seldom plagued by such doubts.

In the absence of a comprehensive survey of the great variety of indulgenced images that circulated in the later Middle Ages, any discussion of their nature and extent must remain provisional.[49] It is evident, however, that such images took many forms; they include sculpture, wall paintings, and altarpieces, as well as more portable images suitable for personal devotion in the privacy of one's own bedchamber or house chapel. Among the portable images are small triptychs whose inner wings were inscribed with indulgenced prayers. A *Madonna and Child* by a follower of Hugo van der Goes (London, National Gallery) has two wings containing a prayer to the *Virgo in Sole* (Virgin in the Sun) yielding an indulgence of 11,000 years.[50] Indulgenced images

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[46] See n. 55 below.

[47] See Sixten Ringbom, "*Maria in Sole* and the Virgin of the Rosary," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 15 (196), p. 328.

[48] For a survey of the subject, see Lea, 3, pp. 561–564 (Chapter XVI. "Apocryphal Indulgences"). That some indulgences were attributed to St. Peter is mentioned in Swanson, p. 254.

[49] For a short but useful discussion of indulgenced images in general, see Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-Up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting* (Abo: Abo Akademi, 1965), pp. 23–30, who observes (p. 28) that there is sometimes only a loose connection between indulgenced prayers and the images connected with them. English indulgenced images, especially prints, are discussed in Swanson, pp. 257–266.

[50] See *National Gallery Catalogues: The Fifteenth Century Netherlandish School*, by Lorne Campbell (London: National Gallery Publications, 1998), pp. 240–247. Campbell notes (p. 246) that the wings were taken over, probably in the later nineteenth century, from another triptych of the period depicting the *Virgo in Sole*. See also Ringbom, "*Maria in Sole*."

were often painted in manuscripts, especially in books of hours. In a book of hours of Italo-French origin done *c.* 1400–1410, for instance, one folio contains an indulgenced prayer below an illumination of the Virgin and St. John in mourning before the figure of Christ displayed in his tomb by an angel and surrounded by the instruments of the Passion.[51] But one of the most common forms of the indulgenced image—perhaps the most common—seems to have been the print, probably because prints were relatively easy to manufacture and distribute, and to use in a domestic setting. They were also relatively inexpensive, especially the woodcuts.

Often bearing such prayers as the Ave Maria, the Paternoster, the Credo (i.e., the Apostle's Creed), and the Prayer to the Sacred Heart of Christ, indulgence prints display a wide range of subject matter. Many of them center on Christ, the most common subjects including the Crucifixion (fig. 8.1), and the *Vera icon*. (fig. 8.6) More unusual is a hand colored German woodcut of around 1482–94; (fig. 8.7) in highly stylized form, it shows the Five Wounds of Christ (side wound and those in the hands and feet) accompanied by several instruments of the Passion and promises that "whoever recalls this image with repentance and pity, as well as with devotion shall have, on each occasion, seven years' indulgence from Pope Innocent."[52] Among indulgence prints dedicated to the Virgin, a favorite was the *Virgo in Sole*, prints of which generally offered considerably greater benefits than the humble woodcut that we have already examined. (fig. 8.2) In Van Meckenem's

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[51] In the "London Hours" (London: British Library, Add. MS 29433, fol. 107v). See Robert G. Calkins, *Illuminated books of the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), pl. 148, pp. 269–270. Although Calkins does not mention the indulgence, the text, fairly legible in the reproduction, includes the words *omnes indulgencias* and several numbers of days; for its reference to Pope Gregory, see below. See also Kathleen Kamerick, *Popular Piety and Art in the Late Middle Ages: Image Worship and Idolatry in England 1350–1500* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 169–80, on indulgenced images in books of hours, including some early printed ones.

[52] *Fifteenth Century Woodcuts and Metalcuts*, Catalog by Richard S. Field (Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, 1965), no. 260 (Hereafter *Fifteenth Century Woodcuts* (1965); *Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-Century Woodcuts and Public*. Catalog by Peter Parshall and Rainer Schoch, with David S. Areford, Richard S. Field, and Peter Schmidt. Ex. Cat. Washington, National Gallery of Art, and Nuremberg, Germanisches Museum (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 258–260, cat. no. 78, with color ill (Hereafter *Origins of European Printmaking*). For the medieval devotion to the wounds of Christ, including this print, see David S. Areford, "The Passion Measured: A Late-Medieval Diagram of the Body of Christ," in MacDonald *et al.* 1998, pp. 211–238.

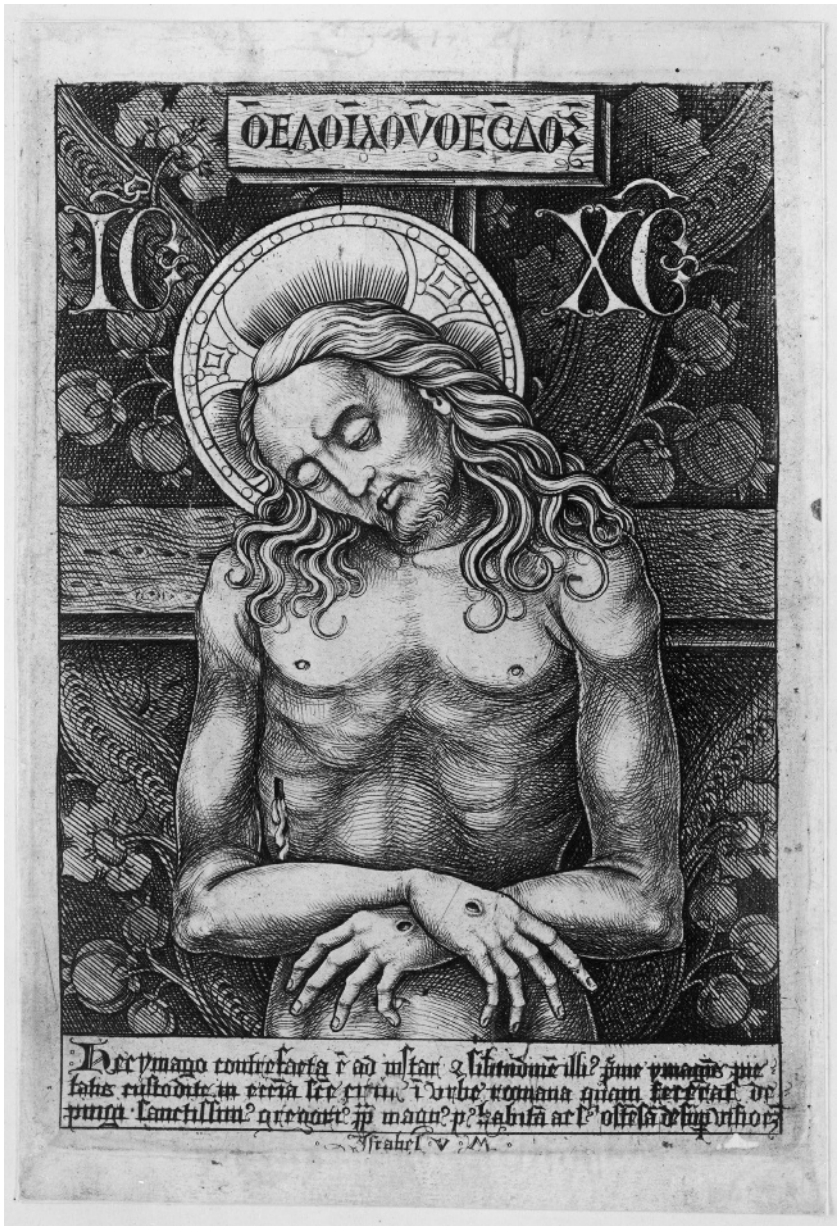

Fig. 8.6 Israhel van Meckenem, *Vera icon*, engraving. Photo: Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

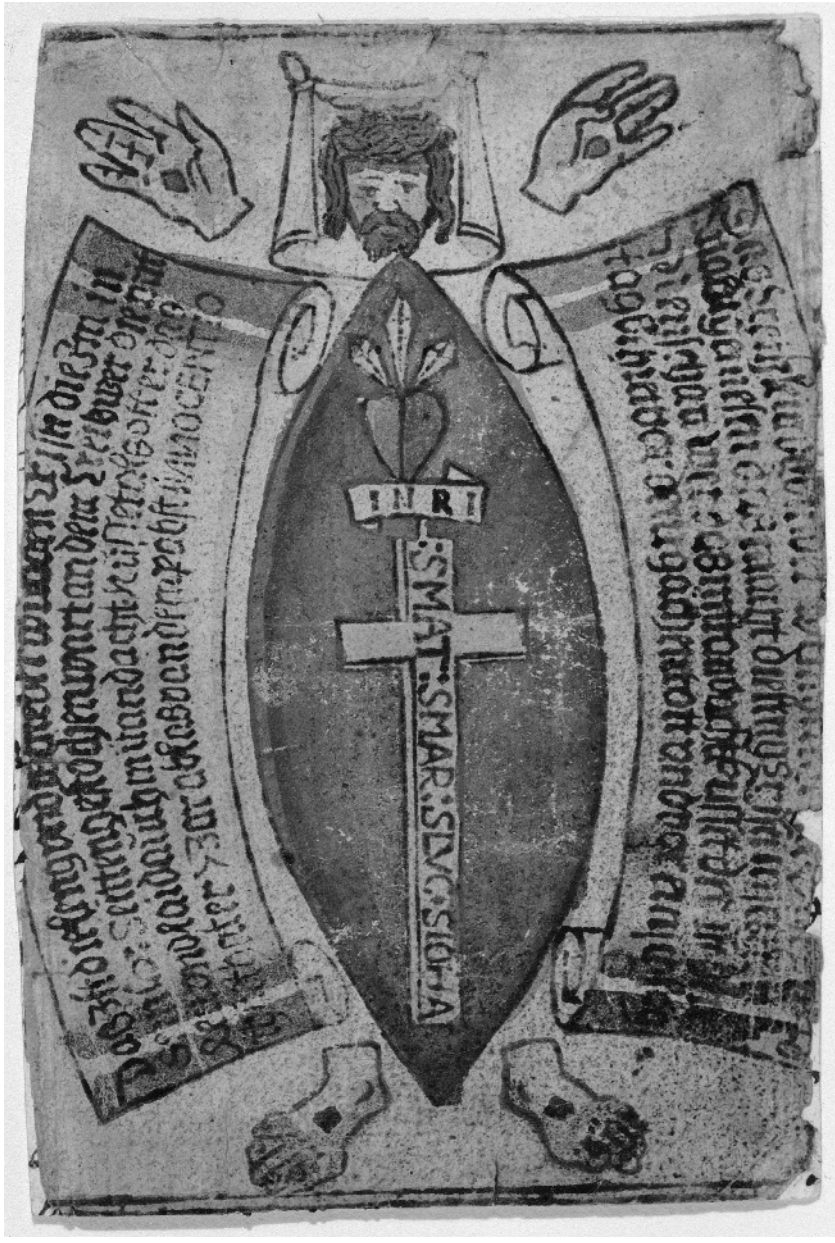

Fig. 8.7 *Wounds of Christ and Instruments of the Passion*, woodcut, German, dated *c.* 1490. Photo: Washington, National Gallery of Art.

engraving of this subject, (fig. 8.8) for example, an indulgence on the authority of Sixtus IV is offered of some 11,000 years "at any time," that is, presumably whenever the appropriate prayer was recited.[53]

One of the most popular indulgenced subjects was the Mass of St. Gregory, inspired by a legendary episode in the life of Pope Gregory the Great (d. 604): once when Gregory was conducting mass, someone in the congregation openly voiced doubts concerning the true presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Gregory's fervent prayer for some sign from Heaven to dispel these doubts was answered with a vision of Christ as Man of Sorrows that appeared on the altar.[54] In time, this legend became associated with an Italo- Byzantine icon of Christ, the original *Vera icon*, preserved in Santa Croce, Rome. Generally accepted as the painting commissioned by Gregory to commemorate the miracle,[55] the *Vera icon* and the paintings and prints inspired by it attracted many papal indulgences, including the engraving by Van Meckenem. Gregory's vision is frequently alluded to in later depictions of his Mass, in which the saint is confronted by the miraculous appearance on the altar of Christ as the Man of Sorrows, often surrounded by the Instruments of the Passion, much as Van Meckenem shows them in several engravings.[56] (fig. 8.3)

Gregory's vision thus served to confirm the actual presence of Christ in the Communion wine and bread, but as Caroline Walker Bynum has pointed out, the depictions of the Mass of St. Gregory that flourished in the later Middle Ages have less to do with the doctrine

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[53] An English translation of the inscription appears in Max Lehrs, *Late Gothic Engravings of Germany and the Netherlands*, intro. A. Hyatt Mayor (New York: Dover Publications, 1969), p. 349, no. 667.

[54] There are several variants of the legend. See Esther Meier, *Die Gregorsmesse: Funktionen eines spätmittelalterliechen Bildtypus* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2006), pp. 23–26.

[55] For differing theories on the date and origins of this image, see C. Bertelli, "The *Image of Pity* in Santa Croce in Gerusalemme," in *Essays in the History of Art Presented to Rudolf Wittkower*, ed. D. Fraser, H. Hubbard and W.J. Lewis (London: Phaidon Press, 1967), pp. 40–55; and Louis M. La Favia, *The Man of Sorrows: Its Origin and Development in Trecento Florentine Painting* (Rome: Edizioni "Sanguis," 1980), pp. 17–28.

[56] For the development and iconography of the Mass of St. Gregory, see Esther Meier, *Die Gregorsmesse: Funktionen eines spätmittelalterliechen Bildtypus* (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 2006); and Cologne, Schnütgen-Museum, *Die Messe Gregors des Grossen: Vision.Kunst. Realität*, ed. Uwe Westfehling (1982).

Fig. 8.8 Israhel van Meckenem, *Virgo in Sole*, engraving. Photo: Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen.

of Transubstantiation than with the souls in Purgatory.[57] Gregory's association with Purgatory is apparently based on two medieval stories. According to one, recounted among other places in the *Golden Legend*, a collection of the lives of Christ, the Virgin and numerous saints, compiled in the thirteenth century by Jacobus da Voragine, Gregory successfully prayed to God for the release of the Emperor Trajan's soul from its torment in Hell.[58] More relevant, perhaps, is the second account, taken from Gregory's own *Dialogues*, in which he freed the soul of a monk from the "fiery torment" by instructing the deceased's abbot to say a daily mass for the repose of his soul for thirty days, without omitting a single day.[59] It was on the basis of the latter story that there originated the practice of thirty postmortem masses, called the Gregory Masses or Trental,[60] to be said for the deceased within a month, sometimes within a year, after his or her day of death, and considered very efficacious for the relief of the souls in Purgatory[61] Indeed, by the late fifteenth century, depictions of the

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[57] Carol Walker Bynum, "Seeing and Seeing Beyond: The Mass of St. Gregory in the Fifteenth Century," in *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, ed. Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 208–240.

[58] Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 1, pp. 178–79: long after Trajan's death, Gregory prayed his soul out of Hell, angering God who forbad him to pray for any damned soul in the future; de Voragine explains, however, that Trajan was either not really in Hell; or that his sentence in Hell was only temporally suspended; or that he was freed from Hell's torments but not admitted to Heaven; hence he still suffered the worst of the *poena damni*, which was denial of the sight of God. In earlier versions of the Tragan legend, the place of temporary purgation was still a part of Hell; but when Purgatory was established as an independent realm, Hell became a place from which souls could never be freed through the intercession of the living, hence de Voraigne's demurrals. The changing concepts of Purgatory and Hell during the Middle Ages will be discussed in my study in progress on the imagery of the afterlife in the Middle Ages.

[59] St. Gregory the Great, *Dialogues*, trans. Odo John Zimmerman (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1959), pp. 267–270 (*Dialogue* 4: 57); a variant of this episode in de Voragine, 1, p. 180. Another legend, not told by Gregory, but cited in Duffy, pp. 293–294, concerns Gregory's deceased mother: tormented in Purgatory because of unconfessed sins, she asks her son to celebrate thirty masses, after which, to use Duffy's words, :she appeared to Gregory "so radiantly beautiful that he mistook her for the Blessed Virgin."

[60] R.W. Pfaff, "The English Devotion of St. Gregory's Trental," *Speculum* 49 (1974), pp. 75–90; Duffy, pp. 370–376.

[61] To cite but one example, after the funeral of the Florentine lady Lucrezia da Panzano in November 1445, her husband "agreed to pay his confessor, Fra Attaviano of Santa Croce, a small amount of expensive velvet in return for reciting the Gregorian mass series;" quoted from Sharon T. Stroccia, *Death and Ritual in Renaissance Florence*

Mass of St. Gregory often include a view into Purgatory beneath the altar or nearby, from which angels pluck the fortunate souls, and similar scenes can be found prefacing the Hours of the Dead in contemporary books of hours.[62] (fig. 8.9) For this reason, by the later Middle Ages images both of the Mass of St. Gregory and the associated Man of Sorrows and their variations became the focus of a number of indulgenced prayers promising a reduction of years spent in Purgatory.

It is thus understandable that the Mass of St. Gregory was a subject frequently chosen for late-medieval tomb monuments, of which a number of survived in Germany, as a reminder to the priest of his duties to the deceased and also to remind visitors to pray for the soul of the deceased.[63] Such prayers by the living were understood to relieve the distress of the souls in Purgatory and to shorten the time they spent there, but the living who prayed for the Poor Souls received spiritual benefits as well: inscriptions surviving on several of these monuments remind visitors of the indulgences accruing to them when they venerated the depicted Mass of St. Gregory with appropriate prayers, most often the Ave Maria and the Paternoster. An example occurs in the epitaph relief of Erasmus and Dorothea von Paulsdorf, in the family chapel in the Minorite cloister at Regensburg; depicting a Mass of St. Gregory, the relief originally bore an inscription promising, among other indulgences, one of 33,000 years from St. Gregory.[64]

(Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), p. 3. Duffy, pp. 293–294, notes that St. Gregory's Trental was increasingly favored in fifteenth-century English testaments in the form of 30 masses spread out over a year at certain times.

[62] For paintings of the Mass of St. Gregory showing the souls in Purgatory, see Meier, figs. 42, 53, 60, 72–73. In prints, a major example occurs in Baccio Baldini, *Mass of St. Gregory, c.* 1463–64; see John Goldsmith Philips, *Early Florentine Designers and Engravers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955), pl. 4, p. 80.

[63] See the examples discussed in Meier, esp. pp. 209–233.

[64] Meier, fig. 100, and pp. 215–218. The inscription, recorded around 1839 before its effacement (*ibid*., p. 215, n. 489), contained the Ave Maria and Paternoster, with several indulgences, including one of 33,000 years from the Pope St. Gregory and another of 40 days from 45 bishops. Comparable postmortem benefits were offered by depictions of St. Gregory's Mass in contexts other than epitaphs. One example is a wall mural of this subject in the Church of St. Andreas at Karlstadt; executed about 1430–1450, its inscription promises that he who kneels and venerates this image at Vespers kneels before this image and recites with devotion 11 Paternosters and 11 Ave Marias will receive 14,000 years of pardon (Meier, pp. 81–82, fig. 18). Swanson, p. 259, remarks of depictions of the Mass of St. Gregory on English tomb brasses, that they were in effect "appropriating the pardon to solicit prayers for the dead within." This was very likely the case on the Continent as well.

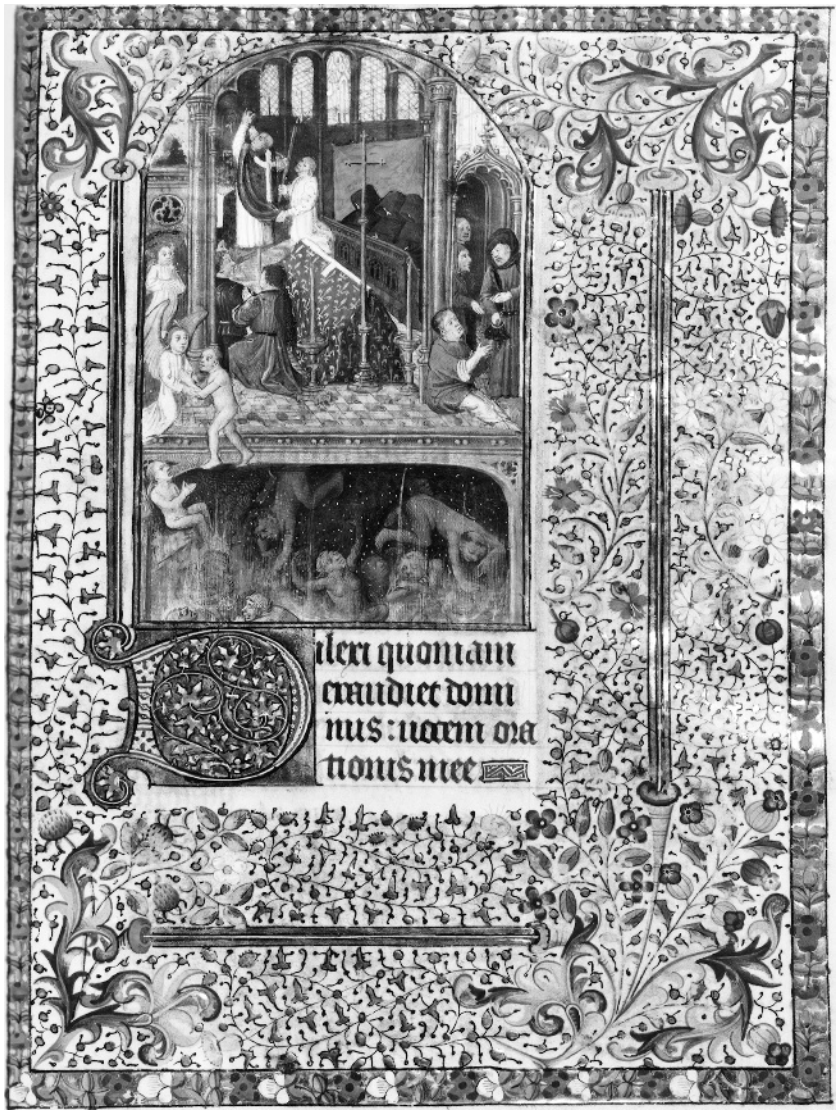

Fig. 8.9 Coëtivy Master, *Funeral Mass with Souls Released from Purgatory*, *Office of the Dead*, Book of Hours, France (Angers?), 1460s. Photo: Baltimore, Walter Art Gallery, Walters 274, fol. 188r.

Along with the Mass of St. Gregory, St. Anne is also frequently encountered in indulgence prints, generally in the company of her daughter and grandson, the Virgin and Child, a group known as *Anna-te-drieën* in Netherlandish, *Anna Selbdritt* in German. A popular saint in this period, Anne rewarded her devotees with benefits of a quite material kind, above all wealth and prosperity, benefits that are promised in the prayers addressed to her in contemporary books of hours.[65] But she also conveyed the more spiritual reward of indulgences. Temporal and eternal benefits are thus combined in a woodcut "plague sheet" showing the *Anna Selbdritt*, published at Augsburg in 1494; (fig. 8.10) the inscription includes an indulgenced prayer against the plague, combined with the assurance that on the authority of "Pope Alexander," presumably Alexander VI, a remission of 10,000 years punishment for mortal sins and 20,000 years for venial sins will be granted to all who say the prayer three times in front of the image.[66] Less generous, but undoubtedly more authentic is a woodcut broadside printed at Strasbourg around 1500 by Matthias Hupfuff; (fig. 8.11) according to the long text printed below, this indulgence was issued in the name of Cardinal Raymundus (Raimond Perault or Peraudi), sent as a papal "indulgence commissary" to the German lands in 1487 to gather funds for military operations against the Turks. The text promises us that all who say with devotion the accompanying prayer before this image of St. Anne "with Our Dear Lady (*mit unser lieben frauwen*) and her Child…(will earn) a hundred days indulgence."[67]

One of the most popular indulgenced devotions toward the end of the Middle Ages centered on the rosary. The origins of the rosary

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[65] For St. Anne in books of hours see Kathryn M. Rudy, *Sint Anna in de Koninklijke Bibliotheek/St. Anne in the National Library of the Netherlands: Ter gelegenheid van de vijfenzestigste verjaardag van Anne S. Kortweg/A Celebration of the Sixty-fifth Birthday of Anne S. Kortweg* (The Hague: Koninklijke Bibliotheek, 2007), pp. 36–40, 49–51.

[66] Virginia Nixon, *Mary's Mother: Saint Anne in late Medieval Europe* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), pp. 87–88. The same indulgences, although with different prayers, but ascribed to the same pope, accompanies a much-kissed illumination of the *Anna-ter-Drieën* in a Flemish book of hours executed after 1503 (Brussels, Bibl. Roy., Ms. II 6907, fols. 121r–22v.; see Rudy, *Sint Anna*, pp. 38–40, fig. 18. A second prayer accompanying this image promises "11,000 years' indulgence given by Pope Julius II. (*ibid*, p. 37). Nixon, index, s. v. "indulgences," refers to numerous indulgences associated with St. Anne, including her images.

[67] See N.G. Stogdon (Middle Chinnock), *German and Netherlandish Woodcuts of the 15th and 16th Centuries*, Cat. VIII (Berlin: Salander-O'Reilly Galleries, Inc., 1991), cat. no. 16. The prayer ends with the plea "Pray God for our poor sins and at our last end (*letzsten ende*).

Ein andechtiges gepet zu der heyligen frauwen sant Anna vnser lieben
frawen mutter für die pestilentz.
Gebenedeyet bistu Maria vol genaden der her ist mit dir Dem genad sey mit mir Besegnet bistu vnder allen frawen Vnd gesegnet sey dein heyliger mutter Anna von welicher
geporen Maria on sund on vnreynikeyt dem heyligen vnd gutigen leichnam Aus welicher
ein geporn ist Jhesus cristus Amen
Hochst Alexander der setz em babst ist hat allen cristi glaubigen menschen geben dye wer dem pild sanct
Anne das obgeschrieben gepete dreymal sprechen Zehentausent iar ablaß todlicher sund Vnd zwem
cristtausent leßlicher sund Vnd ist an dem nechsten vergangen ostertag außgangen von seynem
Bebstlichen stul vnd selbs mit seynen henden angeschlagen an all kirchthür die zu Rom send Vnd
also von seyner heyligkeyt bestetiget. In dem iar als man zalt Nach Cristi geburt vnsers lieben herren
M°. CCCC. vnd in xciij
Casper

Fig. 8.10 *Anna Selbdritt*. Woodcut plague sheet, Augsburg, 1494. Photo: Stockholm: Nationalmuseum.

Sant Anna
Reuerẽdissimus pater ꝛ dñs Raymũdus cardi
nalis ꝛ legat⁹ ꝓcessit omnib⁹ subscriptã oriõez deuote coram ymagino sancte anne(c
tissima virgine maria ꝛ filio ei⁹ depicta) orantibus totiẽs q̃tiẽs centũ dies indulgẽtiar.
Quot ar maris sunt gutte ꝛ arene. Terre grana ꝛ gramia. arborum fructus ꝛ folia.
Stelle celi ꝛ angelici spũs Totiẽs cũ filio tuo Aue castissima mr dei fecũdissimao
maria. gra plena dñs tecum. benedicta tu in mulierib⁹. ꝛ bñdictus fruct⁹ vẽtris t
ſus xp̃s filius dei viui. splẽdor paterne caritatis. et benedicti sint honestissimi par
tui Joachim et Anna. ex q̃bus sine macula caro tua nobilissima ꝓcessit v̄ginea. Orate
deum ꝓ nobis miseris peccatorib⁹. nũc ꝛ in hora mortis nostre. Amen.
Der hochwirdigst vatter vnd her. Raymundus
Cardinal vñ legat hat verlauwen allen die das nachgeschriben gebet sprechen/
mit andacht/ vor sant Annen pild (mit vnser lieben frauwen vnd irem werden
kind gemolt) als offt vñ dick hundert tag ablos.
Als manich vñ viel tropfen wassers vñ sand kornlin ym mere/ körner vnd
greslin vff ertrich/ frücht vnd pletter vff baumẽ/ stern vñ engelische geyst yn den
himelen seyn/ als offt vñ dick mit deinem liebẽ sun seihestu gegrüsset/ du aller rei
nigste mütter gottes/ du aller fruchtbarste vnckfraw Maria vol gnaden/ der
her ist mit dir/ du bist gesegnet vber alle frauwẽ/ vnd gesegnet ist die frücht dei
nes leibs Jhesus cristus/ eyn sun des lebendigẽ gottes/ eyn glätz vetterlicher lieb
vnd gesegnet seyn dein ersamstẽ eltern. Joachim vñ Anna/ vß welchen an sünd
dein edelster vñ vnckfrawlicher leib ist her komen. Bitten gott vor vns amen
sünder yrzund vnd an vnserem letzsten ende. Amen.

Fig. 8.11 Matthias Hupfuff. *Anna Selbdritt*. Woodcut broadside, Strasbourg *c*. 1500. Photo: author.

are unclear,[68] but in its later medieval form it consisted basically of a string of beads employed in a devotional exercise of verbal prayers (the Paternoster and Ave Maria), accompanied by meditations on the so-called Joyous, Sorrowful, and Glorious mysteries, each consisting of five episodes from the lives of Christ and the Virgin. The rosary emerged as a prominent devotion in Germany during the course of the fifteenth century, probably because even earlier, it seems to have been used as an effective way of remitting punishment in the afterlife. As we have seen, the recitation of two of its prayers, the Paternoster and Ave Maria, had long been prescribed as penance, and in a German collection of the miracles of the Virgin compiled about 1435–40 by Johannes Herolt, several of the stories tell of men who were saved from Hell in spite of their sinful lives because they had faithfully recited the Ave Maria.[69] It is also likely that the recitation of the rosary itself was prescribed for the faithful after confession; at least this is suggested by scenes of confession, generally as part of the series of the Seven Sacraments, in which the penitents hold strings of beads.[70] In this connection may be cited another story in Herolt's collection, that of a Carthusian monk who in a vision of Heaven learned that each recitation of the complete rosary earns a full remission of the punishment for one's sins.[71]

Although the first manual devoted to the rosary appeared only in 1475, it was soon followed by a second and vastly more popular handbook published at Ulm and reprinted at least seven times before 1503.[72] This increasing use of the rosary owes much to Pope Sixtus IV, who not only granted several indulgences to the rosary brotherhoods that began to flourish during the later 1470s,[73] but further decreed, as we have seen, that indulgences could be utilized not only by the living for their own needs in the afterlife, but could also be applied to the souls already suffering in Purgatory.[74] Moreover, Sixtus's espousal of the

[68] For the early history and development of the rosary, see Winston-Allen 1997.

[69] Johannes Herolt, *Promptuarium discipuli de miraculis Beate Virginis*; cited in Winston-Allen, p. 144; see Johannes Herolt, *Miracles of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, trans. C.C. Swinton Bland, intro. Eileen Power (London: George Routledge & Sons, 1928), nos. LXVIII, LXX, XCVII, pp. 96–99, 129–130.

[70] Nichols, pp. 236–238.

[71] Herolt, no. XCIX, pp. 131–133; see also Winston-Allen, p. 144.

[72] Winston-Allen, p. 33.

[73] *Ibid.*, p. 122; Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative*, p. 27.

[74] See also Winston Allen, p. 137.

doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, that is, that the Virgin herself had been conceived without sin,[75] undoubtedly added to the postmortem efficacy of the rosary. In any case, later popes granted additional rosary indulgences, while spurious indulgences promised as much as 60,000 years and even more.[76] In any case, the rosary confraternities—which included both men and women—were dedicated to praying the rosary to benefit the souls of its members, as well as those of their families and friends, especially those already deceased.[77] However, as Marcus von Weida assured the readers of his popular rosary manual, published at Leipzig in 1515, the rosary could also be prayed not only in the company of fellow confraternity members, but also in the privacy of one's home, even while one was working. Whether said alone or with others, the prayers and accompanying meditations took only about forty-five minutes a week;[78] but if the faithful were too busy to afford even this modest expenditure of time, Von Weida says, they could hire others as substitutes to say the rosary for them.[79] The vital role played by the rosary confraternities in the afterlife is illustrated in a woodcut in Von Weida's rosary manual;[80] (fig. 8.12) from a glory at upper right, the Virgin, flanked by two cherubs holding garland of roses, dispatches an angel bearing a third rose garland to the crowd of people kneeling below. (Rosaries could be depicted as rose garlands as well as the more familiar string of beads). Led by the Pope, a crowd of the faithful "say their beads" in response to which angels in the opposite corner rescue souls from Purgatory, bearing them to God at the upper right.

Rosary prints before 1500 tend to be fairly modest productions and many contain no inscriptions at all. Typical of such prints, but with an inscription, is a small woodcut of Bavarian origin, done about 1480.

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[75] Mirella Levi d'Ancona, *The Iconography of the Immaculate Conception in the Middle Ages and Early Renaissance*. (New York: College Art Association of America in conjunction with the *Art Bulletin*, 1957), esp. pp. 5–11.

[76] Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative*, p. 27, n. 33.

[77] On the rosary confraternities, see Winston-Allen, esp. pp. 111–132.

[78] Winston-Allen, pp. 117–118. A distinction is made between confraternity members and non-members in a rosary woodcut published at Ulm in 1485, which informs us that reciting the rosary three times a week earns an indulgence of 40 days, but for members of the Confraternity of the Rosary the same devotions earn 100 days; see *Origins of European Printmaking* (2005), cat. no. 85, p. 276.

[79] Marcus von Weida, *Der Speigel hochloblicher Bruderschaft des Rosenkrantz Marie* (Loter, 1515); cited in Winston-Allen, p. 131, n. 94.

[80] See Winston-Allen, pp. 137, 139.

Fig. 8.12 *The Rosary*. Woodcut illustration in Marcus von Weida, *Der Speigel hochloblicher Bruderschaft des Rosenkrantz Marie*, Leipzig: Lotter, 1515, fol. 107v. Photo: Munich, Bayerisches Staatsbibliothek.

(fig. 8.13) It shows the seated Virgin and Christ Child, the latter offering a rosary to a kneeling couple, presumably husband and wife; other rosaries are supported on the rod above. The inscription below tells us that as often as the rosary is said "in praise of Mary and her Child," namely first the Credo, and thereafter five Paternosters and after that ten Ave Marias," this will garner forty days and on every *unser frawen tag* (Our Lady Day; i.e., any feast day of the Virgin) forty years' indulgence, as "given by Pope Sixtus."[81] Rosary imagery is also greatly varied; in a woodcut published in 1492 by Anton Koberger of Nuremberg, for example, it is the *Virgo in Sole*, a standing Madonna and Child on the crescent moon in a glory supported by four angels; the text below lists the prayers to be said after each of the five Paternosters in the rosary.[82]

Several considerably more complex prints were issued after 1500, a testimony to the growing popularity of the rosary confraternities. One is Wolf Traut's broadsheet of 1510, (fig. 8.14) detailing the nature of the rosary, along with Old Testament prototypes. While there is no mention of the days or years of punishment remitted, a plea for the dead is summed up in the upper left corner of the print in the banderole issuing from St. Dominic's mouth: "Recite a rosary for all the faithful in Purgatory."[83]

Even more complicated in its program is a woodcut published only a few years after Traut's broadside, executed by an otherwise unknown Master MTR and dated 1519. (fig. 8.15) Labeled "Ein kurtze beycht Zettel," that is, a "Short Confession Placard," its lower section depicts scenes of the Ten Commandments flanking a block of text that presents a number of subjects reviewed in the confessional manuals of the period, among them the Seven Deadly Sins, the Five Senses, and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.[84] The largest image, however, placed

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[81] Frances H.A. Van den Oudendijk Pieterse, *Dürers "Rosenkranzfest" en de Ikonografie der duitse Rozenkransgroepen van de XVe en het begin der XVIe eeuw* (Amsterdam: De Spieghel, 1939), no. 161; for the inscription, see pp. 255–256.

[82] Michael Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), p. 57, fig. 56.

[83] Winston-Allen, pp. 137–138, fig. 32; Max Geisberg, *The German Single-Leaf Woocut, 1500–1550*, rev. and ed. Walter L. Strauss (New York: Hacker Art Books, 1974), 4, p. 1368, no. G.1416.

[84] This print is fully described in Veronika Thum, *Die Zehn Gebote für die ungelehrten Leut': Der Dekalog in der Graphik des Späten Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit* (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2006), no. 18, pp. 218–219; Geisberg-Strauss, 3, p. 887, no. G.953. Many medieval confessional manuals (but not the more elaborate

Fig. 8.13 *Virgin and Child with a Rosary and a Kneeling Couple*, woodcut, Bavarian, *c.* 1480. Photo: London: British Museum.

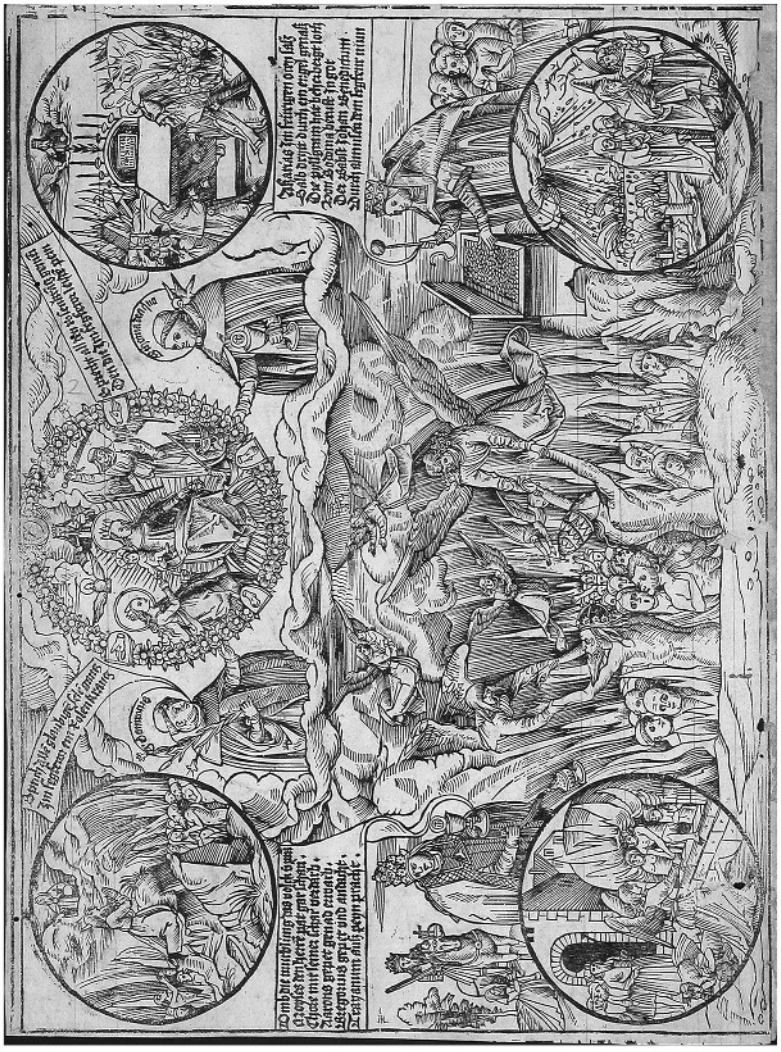

Fig. 8.14 Wolf Traut, *Rosary Print*, woodcut, 1510. Photo: Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek.

Ein kurtze beycht Zettel.
Der himlisch Rosenkrantz. Der lang helt. l. Vater vnser. l. Aue maria. vñ. y. glauben. Der kurtz
¶ Die Siben todesſünd. darauß zu beychten kürzlich begriffen. Zum erſten ſündet der menſch mit
¶ Die neün frembden ſündt. da von beycht
¶ Die siben Sacrament
¶ Die siben gab des heyligen geyſts.
¶ Die vmbſtende der ſünde ſeind die
¶ Ein beſchluß der beycht. ſprich alſo
J. G.

Fig. 8.15 Master MTR, *Ein kurtze beycht Zettel*, woodcut, 1519. Photo: Bremen, Kunsthalle.

in the upper center, is a Rosary scene adapted from a woodcut of 1515 by Hans Süss von Kulmbach.[85] Here the Trinity presides over by the court of Heaven, the whole group enclosed within a large rosary. Below angels retrieve souls from the fires of Purgatory. The left upper corner contains the Mass of St. Gregory, with St. Francis receiving the stigmata on the opposite side, and in the center, two angels displaying the sudarium. The inscription above, labeled "The Heavenly Rosary," offers a "long" set of prayers consisting of fifty Paternosters, fifty Ave Marias, and five Credos. If this devotional regimen seems too onerous for the faithful, there is also a "short" version, comprising only ten Paternosters, ten Ave Marias, and one Credo. In either case, we are assured that "Pope Leo X gives 100 years and 100 *quardtagen*;[86] Innocentius the Cardinal gives 100 days, as often as one prays the long or the short heavenly Rosary. No other indulgence is applicable here." With its emphasis on confession, thus, this woodcut unmistakably articulates what was generally unvoiced in indulgence prints: as a prerequisite for obtaining indulgences, the faithful had to be in a "state of grace," as it was usually phrased, that is, properly confessed and absolved of mortal sin. But how many people actually observed this requirement is a moot question. Already in the later fourteenth century, the English preacher John Mirk saw fit to warn his listeners that indulgences were powerless without full contrition with confession, full charity without pretense, and a steadfast faith; without these three conditions, "no man may have pardon at Rome or elsewhere."[87] It was probably an admonishment often repeated.

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confessional *Summae*) list the sins for which the faithful had to be questioned, including sins against the Ten Commandments and the Seven Deadly Vices; see Thomas N. Tentler, "The Summa for Confessors as an Instrument for Social Control," in *The Pursuit of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Religion: Papers from the University of Michigan Conference*, eds. Charles Trinkaus and Heiko A. Oberman (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974), pp. 103–130, esp. pp. 115–116. The same categories appear in medieval penitential poetry; for some English examples, see Frank Allen Patterson, *The Middle English Penitential Lyric: A Study and Collection of Early Religious Verse* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1911; repr. 1966), nos. 3, 4, pp. 48–53.

[85] Illustrated in Geisberg-Strauss, 3, p. 841, no. 891–7, no. G. 759, as the Celtis Master.

[86] I cannot find *quardtagen* in Grimm's *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, but it probably refers to a 40-day length of time, something like the Latin *quadragesima* or Middle English *lente* (see n. 44 above).

[87] Judy Ann Ford, *John Mirk's Festial: Orthodoxy, Lollardy, and the Common People in Fourteeth-Century England* (Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 2006), p. 52.

So far, the prints we have considered bear inscriptions stipulating the indulgenced prayers to be recited and often listing the number of years and days of indulgences garnered by each recitation. But these are only a small fraction of the prints that were employed as focal images of indulgenced prayers. The same purpose must have been served by the great number of prints that depict indulgenced subjects but lack identifying inscriptions. This suggestion is supported by an English primer, or book of hours, printed in 1497: it includes the prayer to the *Arma Christi* with the promise that "To them that before thys ymage of pyte deuoutly say v. Pater noster. v. Aves & a Credo pythously beholdynge these armes of criste are graunted .xxxii.m vii hondred & lv. yers of pardon." Nevertheless, no such image accompanies this text, and Kathleen Kamerick correctly concludes that "perhaps the book's makers assumed the Image of Pity and the *Arma Christi* were so common that any reader might easily refer to one at home or in church."[88] Similarly, the often-repeated indulgence of 11,000 years attributed to Pope Sixtus IV for the *Virgo in Sole*, stipulates that the prayer *Ave Maria Sanctissima* to be said *ante [*or *coram] ymaginem marie in sole*…" (i.e.: "before [or in the presence of] the image of Mary in the sun"),[89] but cites no particular example of this image before which the devout should pray. Indeed, the *Virgo in Sole* survives in a number of woodcuts without inscriptions,[90] (fig. 8.16) and so do such subjects as the *Anna Selbdritt*, and the Man of Sorrows, to name only a few.[91] Diane Scillia suggested that many of these prints without inscriptions were pasted into prayer books and books of hours, with the appropriate prayer or prayers added by hand beneath the image or on an adjacent folio.[92] This is most likely in the case of the woodcuts that are

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[88] Kamerick, pp. 172–173.

[89] Ringbom, "*Maria in Sole*," p. 326.

[90] *Fifteenth Century Woodcuts*, (1965), cat. nos. 158–65, 172.

[91] *Ibid*, cat. nos. 187–188 (*Anna Selbtdritt*), and 151 (Man of Sorrows). Another is the Pietà, which was a very popular subject in European religious art from the fourteenth century on. Images of "Our Lady of Pity," as the Pietà was known in England, also carried indulgences, and it is not unlikely that woodcuts depicting the mourning Virgin supporting the dead Christ in her lap (*ibid*., cat. nos. 144–146) were also intended as indulgenced images. For the indulgences attached to the PietB, see Richard Marks, *Image and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (Sutton Mill, Gloucesterhsire: Sutton Publishing, 2004), p. 139. Further research will probably reveal other indulgenced subjects hitherto unrecognized that were illustrated in prints.

[92] Personal communication with the author. The frequent pasting of prints into books of hours and other manuscripts is discussed by Ursula Weeks, *Early Engravers and Their Public: The Master of the Berlin Passion and Manuscripts in the Rhine-Maas Region, ca. 1450–1500* (n. p.: Harvey Miller, 2004).

Fig. 8.16 *Virgo in Sole*. Woodcut. Augsburg, *c.* 1480. Photo: Washington, National Gallery of Art.

very small in scale, often scarcely exceeding the size of a modern business card. But it may also be that the simplest woodcut images, summary in execution and lacking inscriptions, were directly primarily to the illiterate lay people who would have learned of the relevant indulgence by word of mouth and who would have memorized the Credo and such common prayers as the Paternoster and Ave Maria.[93] Such an audience could easily have grasped the function of a tiny woodcut *Mass of St. Gregory*, for instance, that includes an angel fetching souls from Purgatory.[94] (fig. 8.17)

Even the most "artistic" prints of the period were employed as the objects of indulgenced prayers, including Van Meckenem's masterful engravings of the *Mass of St. Gregory*. The same may well be true of some of the prints of Albrecht Dürer, such as his *Mass of St. Gregory* of 1511, (fig. 8.18) which has an image of the Holy Face propped up on the altar, or *The Sudarium Displayed by Two Angels*, an etching of 1513; (fig. 8.19) in the case of the latter print, we have seen that the *Vera icon* traditionally carried an indulgence of 10,000 years.[95]Although these prints are devoid of relevant inscriptions, Dürer may have counted on such familiar indulgences enhancing their attractiveness to potential customers.[96] It is also not unlikely that other printmakers issued similar indulgenced subjects on their own initiative in the hope of increasing their profits. This is in contrast to the papal and episcopal bulls of indulgence that always listed the person or persons authorizing them, as well as the purpose for which the indulgences were

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[93] That non-literate people and those of limited literacy memorized Latin texts without understanding their precise grammatical meanings is suggested by Paul Saenger, "Books of Hours and the Reading Habits of the Later Middle Ages," in *The Culture of Print: Power and the Uses of Print in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Roger Chartier, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), pp. 141–173, esp. pp. 142, 149. Ford, *John Mirk*, notes that at least in the case of England even parish priests were apt have a limited knowledge of Latin, p. 24.

[94] *Fifteenth Century Woodcuts*, (1965), no. 150.

[95] See n. 47 above. See also Jane Campbell Hutchison, *Albrecht Dürer. A Biography* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), p. 124.

[96] Dürer may have had a similar hope in mind with the *Small Woodcut Passion* of 1509–1511, when he inserted a devotional image of Veronica with the Sudarium (B.38). Although it comes immediately after the *Bearing of the Cross*, in which Veronica, bearing her veil, approaches the fallen Christ, the narrative flow of the *Small Passion* is disrupted by the manner in which Veronica, standing between Saints Peter and Paul, solemnly displays the Sudarium to the viewer. Dürer's motive is less certain in his *Sudarium Held by One Angel*, an etching of 1516 (B.26), in which the Holy Face is viewed upside-down on the fluttering Sudarium.

Fig. 8.17 *Mass of St. Gregory*. Woodcut, Augsburg?, *c.* 1470–80. Photo: Washington, National Gallery of Art.

Fig. 8.18 Albrecht Dürer, *Mass of St. Gregory*, woodcut, 1511. Photo: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts.

Fig. 8.19 Albrecht Dürer, *The Sudarium Displayed by Two Angels*, etching, 1514. Photo: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts.

proclaimed, and whose production in great numbers became a very lucrative source of job-printing from the mid-fifteenth century on.[97]

Some indulgence prints, however, were likely authorized by particular religious institutions. This is almost certainly the case with the three engravings of the *Madonna of Einsiedeln* by the Master E.S., all dated 1466.[98] The Benedictine monastery church of Einsiedeln in Switzerland was famous for the miraculous consecration in 948 of a ninth-century chapel preserved as a shrine in its apse, and as Edith Warren Hoffman convincingly argued in 1961, these engravings were commissioned by the monastery to celebrate the five-hundredth anniversary of the attached indulgence.[99] The miracle is commemorated in the largest of the three prints (fig. 8.20) in the inscription around the top of the arch: "This is the angelic consecration of [the chapel of] our dear Lady of Einsiedeln; hail, full of grace." The last four words, in fact, names the prayer (a variant of the Ave Maria) recited by the pilgrims venerating the Virgin in order to obtain the indulgence that, according to legend, Bishop Conrad of Constance obtained from Pope Leo III eight years after the consecration; the indulgence was reaffirmed by Pius II around 1465. This circumstance suggests that the indulgences

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[97] For the printing of papal and episcopal bulls of indulgences, see Elizabeth L. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early-Modern Europe*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); p. 58 passim; and Paul Needham, *The Printer and the Pardoner: An Unrecorded Indulgence Printed by William Caxton for the Hospital of St. Mary Rounceval, Charing Cross* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1986). For indulgences printed by Gutenberg and his successors, see Pierce Butler, *The Origin of Printing in Europe*. The University of Chicago Studies in Library Science (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1940), pp. 67–71; and Mainz, Stadt Mainz, *Gutenberg: Man of the Millennium. From a Secret Enterprise to the First Media Revolution*. Abridged Version of the Catalogue of the Exhibition Staged by the City of Mainz on the Occasion of the Sixth Centenary of the Birth of Johannes Gutenberg, April 14–October 3, 2000, pp. 127–128, *passim*.

[98] Janez Höfler, *Der Meister E.S.: Ein Kapital europäischer Kunsts des 15. Jahrhunderts*. (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2007), 1, pp. 91–92; 2, figs. 68, 72, 81.

[99] Edith Warren Hoffman, "Some Engravings Executed by the Master E.S. for the Benedictine Monastery at Einsiedeln," *Art Bulletin* 43/ 3 (September 1961), pp. 231–237. As Hoffman notes, the structure depicted in the three prints represents the chapel shrine which, in the largest print, is being consecrated by God the Father and Christ (*ibid*., p. 231). See also Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung; and Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Kupferstichkabinett, *Meister E.S.: Ein Öberrheinischer Kupferstecher der Spätgotik*, 1987, 44–46, cat. no. 32; and Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe 1300–1500*, cat Henk van Os, *et al*., trans. Michael Hoyle (1994), pp. 81-86. An additional inventive for renewing the indulgence was to raise funds to rebuild the church, which had burned down in 1465.

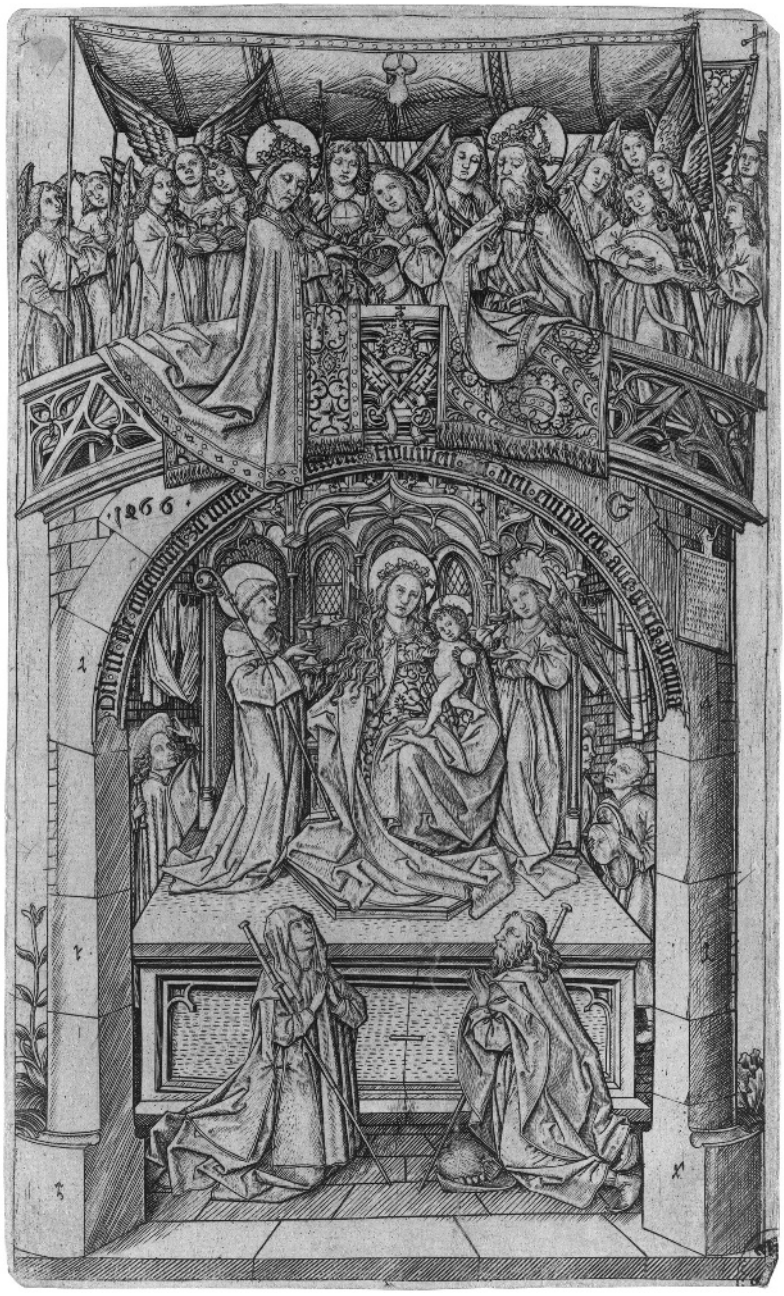

Fig. 8.20 Master E. S., *The Large Madonna of Einsiedeln*, engraving, 1466. Photo: Dresden, Kupferstich-Kabinett, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen.

were also available to those who repeated the prayer before the print; the papal coat of arms on the two smaller Einsiedeln prints, although otherwise without inscriptions, very likely have conveyed a similar promise.

The smallest of the Einsiedeln prints was copied by Israhel van Meckenem,[100] who can in fact to have cornered the market for indulgence engravings, and chief among them are his various versions of the *Mass of St. Gregory*.[101] (fig. 8.3) These prints, according to Henk van Os were published at the behest of the Carthusians of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome, who wished to advertise the *Vera icon* housed in their church.[102] Van Os also links several engravings by Van Meckenem of the *Vera icon* to the same commission.[103] (fig. 8.6) Although the inscription on neither *Vera icon* specifies the indulgences to be earned, we may assume that these images, too, were used as the object of indulgenced prayer. In a third instance, the Dominican convent at Unterlinden, which owned an indulgenced miraculous painting of the Virgin and Child, seems to have authorized a metalcut "copy" of this image that survives in six impressions.[104] In any case, further investigation might identify other indulgence prints published by churches, abbeys, and other ecclesiastical foundations.

But if indulgenced prints were published as much for profit as for piety, there is no doubt that they were eagerly sought after by the faithful. This is unmistakably indicated by the sheer number of different compositions that exist of these prints, including the many copies or

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[100] For Van Meckenem's copy, see Fritz Koreny, *Israhel van Meckenem*, 2 vols. *Hollstein's German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts, 1400–1700* (Amsterdam: A.L. van Gendt, 1986), vol. 14, p. 92, no. 212; ill. vol. 14A, p. 90. My thanks to Diane Scillia who called this print to my attention.

[101] Koreny lists some eleven prints of the *Mass of St. Gregory*, as well as three of the related *Vera icon* (cat. nos. 345–354 and 165–167 respectively) and seven prints of the *Virgo in Sole* (nos. 193, 196–197, 199–203), many of them bearing inscriptions listing the indulgences offered by them.

[102] This account is given in Amsterdam, *Art of Devotion*, pp. 108–113; however, no source is given for this information. Equally possible, as Parshall suggests for both these prints and those depicting the *Imago Pietatis* (discussed below), Van Meckenem may simply have independently capitalized on the Carthusian campaign in distant Rome; see Peter Parshall, "Imago contrafacta: Images and Facts in the Northern Renaissance," *Art History* 16/4 (December 1993): 554–579, esp. p. 557. Cf. also David Landau and Peter Parshall, *The Renaissance Print, 1470–1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 58.

[103] Amsterdam, *Art of Devotion*, pp. 110–112.

[104] Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), pp. 279–95, and fig. 6.13, p. 291.

variations of certain favored ones. And the demand for such prints was surely enhanced by the great "inflation," as modern scholars have often put it,[105] in the days and years of remission of punishment that were promised by indulgences in the later Middle Ages. If in the thirteenth-century, reciting the hymn *Ave Facies Praeclara* earned a modest indulgence of 10 days, in the fifteenth century, reciting the *Salve sancta facies* yielded 10,000 days,[106] and prayers to the *Virgo in Sole* (fig. 8.2) garnered 11,000 years, while a *Mass of St. Gregory* engraved by Van Meckenem, (fig. 8.3) the promise of 20,000 years' indulgence in the first state was more than doubled in the fourth state to 45,000 years.[107] A more impressionistic indication of such largess is conveyed in a woodcut of the *Holy Face on a Cloth* (based on Veronica's Sudarium), issued in Ulm around 1482: it merely promises that reciting the inscribed prayer will earn so many days of indulgences "that I simply cannot grasp it."[108] But merchants and others would hardly have been satisfied with such fuzzy accounting, and by the early sixteenth century, spurious Rosary indulgences were in circulation specifying up to 120,000 years.[109] (Although even this pales in comparison with the relic collection of the Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, which was worth, so he boasted, almost two million years of pardons!)[110] Furthermore, these indulgences could be easily multiplied by the repetition of the appropriate prayer or prayers, an advantage that many indulgence prints did not fail to mention.[111] It would thus seem that the Treasury of Merit was truly inexhaustible and that the faithful could draw upon it repeatedly in order to stockpile an almost infinite number of indulgences to meet future contingencies. To what

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[105] Southern (1970), p. 136 ff., for example, includes the increased years granted by indulgences as part of the "inflationary spiral" in the later Middle Ages. Hamilton describes the "spiritual currency" of indulgences as "attacked by inflation;" see Bernard Hamilton, *Religion in the Medieval West* (London: Edward Arnold, 1986), p. 130.

[106] Amsterdam, *Art of Devotion*, p. 84.

[107] *Fifteenth Century Woodcuts* (1965), cat. no. 214; Koreny, no. 353, notes that the change was made in the fourth state.

[108] *Origins of European Printmaking* (2005), p. 241, cat. no. 71. Cf. a common prayer to be recited before a crucifix, promising "as many dayes of pardon as be gravel stonis in the see herbis grewing on the erth." Swanson, pp. 247–248.

[109] Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative*, p. 27.

[110] Winston-Allen, p. 140. See also Paul M. Bacon, "Art Patronage and Piety in Electoral Saxony: Frederick the Wise Promotes the Veneration of His Patron St. Bartholomew," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 39/4 (Winter, 2008), pp. 973–1001, with further references on Frederick's relic collection in n. 3.

[111] See, for example, the inscriptions on our figs. 3, 7, 8, 13, 15.

extent the ecclesiastical authorities objected to this gross inflation of indulgences has yet to be determined, but we may note that in the early fifteenth century, Jean Gerson, chancellor of the University of Paris, objected to the exorbitant indulgences often attached to certain images;[112] sometime later none other than Marcus von Weida himself sought to counter the amassing of rosary indulgences by limiting the number that one could earn in one day.[113] But as Anne Winston-Allen cogently remarked, "Who could know how many years of pardon a person (or one's friends) might really need?"[114] There is no doubt that many of the medieval faithful would have asked the same question.

But why? All things considered, it may still be difficult for us to grasp just why people in the Late Middle Ages were so anxious to accumulate such hoards of spiritual coinage. Surely a postmortem "bank account," as it were, of several hundred- thousand years or more credit available from the Treasury of Grace would have been far in excess of what might have been needed to ease a soul's way through the afterlife. As John Wycliffe had already pointed out in the later fourteenth century, indulgences for a hundred thousand years or more would "either be false, or the Day of Judgment will be delayed that long, or indulgences are effective in hell after the Day of Judgment."[115] Wycliffe's complaint strikes to the heart of the matter. As everyone knew, Purgatory would last only until the Last Judgment, after which indulgences of course would be superfluous for the Blessed, and it was a grievous sin against God's justice to believe that indulgences could help the Damned in Hell. Moreover, many people believed that the world had become so immersed in depravity and evil that the Final Reckoning in fact was not far off; as Sebastian Brant would later tell his readers: "We do approach the Judgment Day, /Since mercy's held in cold despite/We're now approaching total night…"[116] The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, warned the *Four Last Things*, a

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[112] Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative*, p. 24.

[113] Winston-Allen, pp. 130–131, n. 94. Further research would probably reveal others.

[114] *Ibid*., p. 130.

[115] John Wycliffe, *De ecclesia*, 1378–79, quoted from Swanson, p. 299.

[116] Sebastian Brant, *The Ship of Fools*, trans. and ed. Edwin H. Zeydel (New York: Dover Publications, 1944), p. 336 (Chapter 103, "Of the Antichrist"). For this topos, see further James M. Dean, *The World Grown Old in Later Medieval Literature*. Medieval Academy Books, No. 101 (Cambridge: The Medieval Academy of America, 1997), esp. pp. 60–67. On the imminence of the Last Judgment as a sermon topos, see, for example,Taylor, pp. 97–101.

widely-circulated treatise on death and the afterlife, in this case citing 1 Thessalonians 5:2,[117] and preachers everywhere drove home that lesson; indeed the Spanish Dominican St. Vincent Ferrer (d. 1419), seems to have specialized in sermons that described in detail the imminent end of the world and the awful judgment awaiting those who failed to repent.[118]

Many of these prophesies of impending doom, of course, were stock rhetorical devices, but even so, I venture to suggest that it was not so much earthly time that troubled the faithful, but what we may designate as purgatorial time. According to a widely prevailing belief, the duration of suffering in Purgatory, because of its intensity, would be experienced as lasting much longer than an equal amount of time on earth.[119] Medieval writers differed widely in their calculation of the ratio between earthly and purgatorial time. In one medieval exemplum, the soul of a monk returns to his living colleagues to complain that he has been left to suffer in Purgatory for some twenty years without the prayers that had been promised for his soul, only to be told that he died just a moment before.[120] A comparable thought is conveyed in a Middle English poem: for one earthly day spent in Purgatory, "a thowsand wyntre shuld it seme."[121] But this difference between earthly and purgatorial time could be much greater: in another medieval exemplum, a dying man is promised that he will have to remain in Purgatory only until his requiem mass is finished; but scarcely an hour after his death, he is convinced that he has been suffering for a

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[117] Marieluise Dusch, *De veer utersten: Das Cordiale de quatuor novissimis van Gerhard von Vliederhoven in mittelniederdeutchen Überlieferung* (Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 1975), p. 58, lines 23–25.

[118] For St. Vincent's career, see Francis Oakley, *The Western Church in the Later Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), pp. 261–270.

[119] Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, pp. 73–74. Conversely, time did not exist in Heaven since it was changeless. Hence in medieval accounts, mortals who somehow found their way to Paradise frequently discover on their return that during what they had experienced as a brief absence, years and even centuries had passed on earth. See Orlanda S.H. Lie, "The Concept of Time in the Medieval World View," in *Janus at the Millennium: Perspectives on Time in the Culture of the Netherlands*, ed. Thomas F. Shannon and Johan P. Snapper (Dallas: University Press of America, 2004), pp. 201–209, esp. pp. 201–202. Several more examples are cited in Howard Rollin Patch, *The Other World According to Descriptions in Medieval Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950, repr. 1970), pp. 159–160, 166.

[120] Duffy, p. 342, who cites the tale from *The Arte and Craft to Lyve Well* (Wynkyn de Worde, 1505).

[121] Cited in Takami Matsuda, *Death and Purgatory in Middle English Didactic Poetry* (Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 1997), p. 238.

thousand years[122] Similarly, in a sermon delivered in Florence on All Souls Day, 1496, the Dominican friar Girolamo Savonarola assures his audience that every hour spent in Purgatory "seems a thousand before he can leave those torments behind." And that is why, he continues, "everyone ought to pray every day for the dead, because they are waiting for our prayers, since they cannot merit anything more for themselves, if they are not aided through the prayers of the Church."[123]

Medieval Christians had at their command many safeguards to guarantee them a good death, including prayers to the Virgin and to Barbara, Catherine, and various other saints asking to be warned in advance of impending death, and in their final hour, the whole panoply of Heaven to assist them in dying well. But even if thus assured of escaping an eternity in Hell, none but the most saintly souls could escape Purgatory, whose time of agony, if not eternal, might easily seem to approach eternity for the Poor Souls who suffered it. Underwritten by the Church, indulgences offered an effective means of shortening, perhaps—as some must have dared to hope!—even bypassing completely this dreaded time of torment. And indulgenced prayers, moreover, provided a means of acquiring remission of postmortem punishment that was open to all, to even the poorest. In this exchange of prayers and promises, therefore, the faithful must have found in the most modest indulgence print a viable and most tangible instrument for negotiating the vicissitudes of the afterlife—both for themselves and for family and friends who had preceded them, and a sure help to speed them on their ways to eternal bliss.

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[122] Frederic C. Tubach, *Index Exemplorum: A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales*. FF Communications No. 204 (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedakatemia /Akademia Scientiarum Fennica, 1969), p. 307, no. 4004.

[123] Girolamo Savonarola, *Selected Writings: Religion and Politics, 1490–1498*, trans. and ed. Anne Borelli and Maria Pastore Passaro, intro. Alison Brown, foreword Giuseppe Mazzotta (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 50. It was a common medieval belief that death deprived a soul of the ability to repent its sins or to achieve its salvation through its own efforts. See, for example, Catherine of Siena, *The Dialogue*, trans. Suzanne Noffke, preface Giuliana Cavallini (Mahwah, NY: Paulist Press, 1980), p. 82.

9. ART AND ADVERTISING: LATE MEDIEVAL ALTARPIECES IN GERMANY

Amy M. Morris

In the lower horizontal border of Lucas Moser's *St. Magdalene Altarpiece*, one of the most important paintings created in fifteenth-century Germany, the text promises indulgence to those who visited the church at Tiefenbronn on the feasts of St. Mary Magdalene, St. Anthony, and St. Erhard: […]DICAT[…]/MARIA.MAGDALENA.(ET).IN. DIE./ BE(A)TI.ANTHONY.(ET). EKHARDI.TOTIDEM.INDVGENCIA[…].[1] (fig. 9.1) Despite the historical implications of this inscription, no studies have yet addressed its significance in the context of indulgence practices or considered how those practices shaped the function of the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece*.[2] Contrary to earlier studies, which linked the indulgence text to Mary Magdalene's cult at Tiefenbronn, I believe that its presence transformed the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* into an "Indulgenced Panel" or *Ablaß-Tafel*: a type of object, frequently an altarpiece, consisting of a specified subject accompanied by an indulgence inscription.[3] As a medium for advertising a church's indulgence privileges, these altarpieces, including the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece*, attracted visitors who wished to reduce their potential purgatorial

[1] "(Es wird gegeben am Tag) der heiligen Maria Magdalena und am Tag der heiligen Antonius und Erhard ebensoviele (Tage) Ablaß." Franz Heinzmann and Mathias Köhler. *Der Magdalenenaltar des Lucas Moser in der Gotischen Basilika Tiefenbronn* (Regensburg: Verlag Schnell & Steiner, 1994), p. 16.

[2] Moser's familiarity with the Flemish *ars nova* style has been the focus of most scholarly interest in the *Tiefenbronn Altarpiece*.

[3] Researchers suggested at the Moser symposium in 1971 that "a more precise examination of the Magdalene cult in the region of south Germany could provide answers to the function of the indulgence inscription." Reiner Hausherr, "'Der Magdalenenaltar in Tiefenbronn.' Bericht über die wissenschaftliche Tagung am 9. und 10. März 1971 im Zentralinstitut in München," *Kunstchronik* 24 (1971), p. 201. Identifying the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* as an indulgence altarpiece as opposed to a cult object in no way diminishes the cult of the Magdalene at Tifenbronn. In fact, the possibility that Tiefnenbronn's indulgence privileges were connected to the veneration of the Magdalene is possible. The historical reality, however, is that churches obtained indulgence privileges for a variety of occasions beyond a saint's cult.

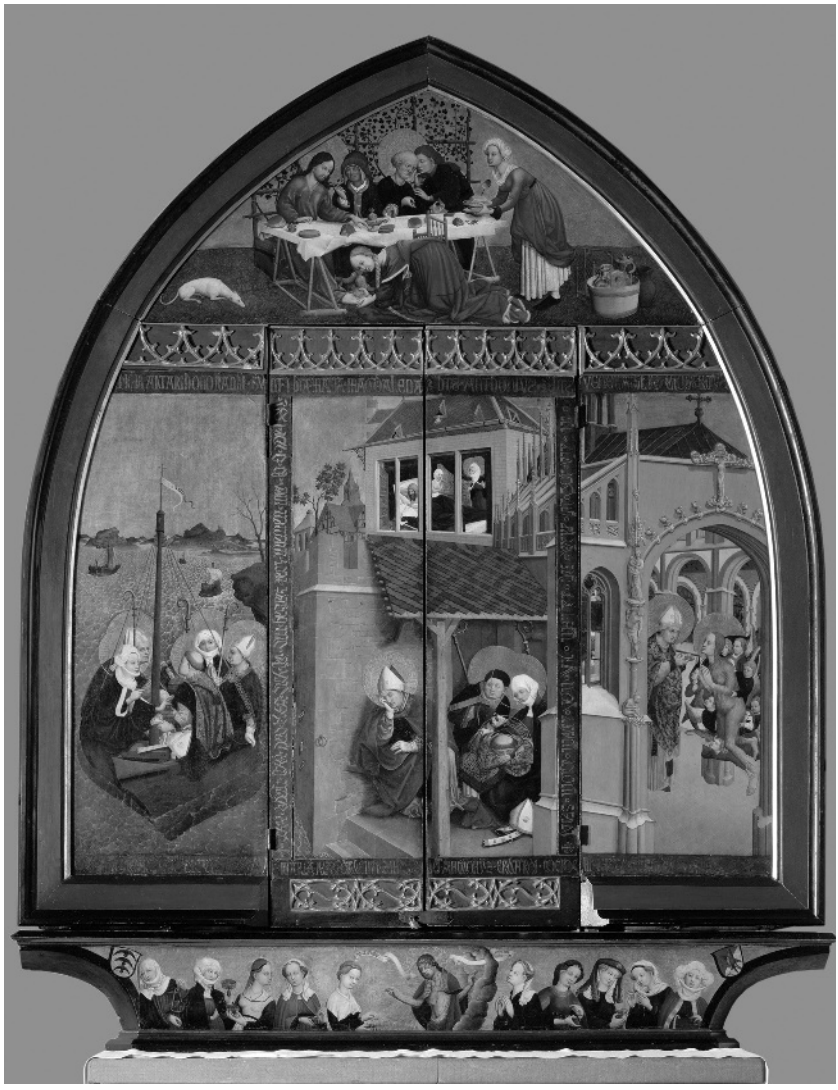

Fig. 9.1 Lucas Moser, *Altar of the Magdalene*, 1432, panel, 300 × 240 cm. Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.

punishment, to specific ecclesiastical establishments. Even more significantly, indulgenced altarpieces encouraged a more personal reaction from the viewer. Reflecting the terms of indulgence, the altarpieces directed the beholder, through inscriptions and imagery, to perform the pious acts required to earn the indulgence.

Development of the Indulgenced Image

Prominently displaying the promise of indulgence, the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* belongs with other indulgenced images, a category of art whose popularity soared in the Late Gothic period.[4] The origins of the indulgenced image can be traced to the thirteenth century when Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) attached an indulgence to a prayer he composed in honor of the *Vera Icon* or Holy Face of Jesus.[5] Although it was the saying of the prayer that earned the indulgence, the combination of text and image resulted in a close association between the image of the *Vera Icon* and Pope Innocent III's indulgence.

In addition to the *Vera Icon*, a limited range of subjects with a fairly standardized iconography became popular as indulgenced images: the Gregorian *Man of Sorrows*, the *Arma Christi*, and the *Virgin in Sole*. The *Man of Sorrows*, a depiction of Gregory the Great's (*c.* 540–604) miraculous vision of Christ, which occurred while the Pope was saying Mass at Santa Croce in Gerusalemme, was almost as popular as the *Vera Icon*.[6] According to the legend, St. Gregory had an image made according to his vision of Christ and promised indulgence to everybody who prayed before it.[7] The *Arma Christi* or instruments of Christ's Passion and death also became popular as indulgenced images. Although the indulgence attached to these cannot be traced to a single Pope, the inscriptions accompanying their representation frequently promise 6,666 days indulgence: the same number as the

[4] They reached the height of their popularity in the second half of the fifteenth century, when the block-print technique made their mass production possible. Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-up in Fifteenth Century Devotional Painting*, 2nd ed. (Doornspijk: Davaco Publishers, 1984), p. 24.

[5] Flora Lewis, "Rewarding Devotion: Indulgences and the Promotion of Images." In *The Church and the Arts*, ed. DianaWood (Cambridge, MS: Blackwell Publishers, 1992), p. 179.

[6] Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative*, p. 25.

[7] According to prayer books and block prints St. Gregory promised 14,000 years indulgence. Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative*, p. 25.

wounds of Christ.[8] While most indulgenced images featured Christ, an iconic and indulgenced image of the Virgin, known as the *Maria in Sole*, appeared in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Europe.[9] According to the text on different representations of the *Maria in Sole*, Pope Sixtus IV gave an indulgence of 11,000 years for reciting a prayer before the image.[10]

While an indulgence inscription is a point of similarity between the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* and the aforementioned images, there are significant differences. The content of the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece's* indulgence inscription is unlike other indulgenced works. For example, images such as the *Vera Icon* and the Gregorian *Man of Sorrows* were connected to specific edicts mentioned above and most identify the prayer to be said before the image and the number of times it was to be chanted.[11] In contrast, the text of the inscription on the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* does not allude to a specific indulgence and a specified prayer is conspicuously absent. Another major distinction between indulgenced images and the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* resides in its location and scale. Largely devotional in character, indulgenced images were intended for private use. Rather than depicting an iconic devotional image of Christ or Mary, the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* is composed of episodes from the life of a saint. And far from being devotional in character, the scenes on the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* give primacy to the narrative. In contrast to the intimate size of traditional indulgence prints and devotional images, which were designed for private viewing, the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece's* large format was intended for public display.[12]

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[8] Ringbom, p. 26.

[9] The imagery comes from the book of Revelation. In chapter 12, John describes a woman clothed in the sun with the moon under her feet and wearing a crown of twelve stars. This so-called Woman of the Apocalypse was associated with the Virgin. Henk van Os, *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe 1300–1500* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 154

[10] Sixten Ringbom, "Maria in Sole and the Virgin of the Rosary," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtald Institute* 25 (1962), 326.

[11] Indulgenced images were frequently associated with particular prayers even if not all representations agree on the number of times that the prayer should be recited or even which prayer should be said. For example, the prayers required for images of the Man of Sorrows often fluctuate between one to five *Pater Nosters* and *Aves* or include three prayers reportedly composed by Gregory himself. Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative*, p. 25.

[12] For more information on the rise in indulgenced images as a reflection of private devotion, see Ringbom, p. 25.

Ablaß-Tafeln or "Indulgence Panels" Defined

Although the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* has little in common with indulgenced prints and devotional images, this was not the only category of indulgenced images that existed in the Late Gothic period. Critical in the evaluation of the indulgence inscription on the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* is the *Ablaß-Tafel* or "Indulgenced Panel," a category that, as the name suggests, includes different forms of panels such as altarpieces, reliefs, and epitaphs.[13] In contrast to standard indulgenced images, indulgenced panels were publicly displayed in churches where their inscription was visible to a wide audience. Further distancing themselves from more recognizable indulgenced images, indulgenced panels do not conform to a defined iconography, but instead exhibit a wide range of subjects.

Especially relevant to the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* are altarpieces that functioned as indulgenced panels. For example, Dudik described two indulgenced panels (the earlier dating from 1466) in the Treasury and Museum of the Teutonic Order in Vienna.[14] (fig. 9.2) Divided into two equal parts with columns of text and a miniature of St. Elizabeth, it imitates an open codex. The text, written in German with Latin letters underneath, lists the indulgences given to the Teutonic Order by the Pope.[15]

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[13] Otto Schmitt defined *Ablaß-Tafeln* as "religious images in the form of a painted panel or relief to which, in connection with pious viewing and the recital of designated prayers, indulgence was attached." He identified a stone relief in the Fritzlar Stiftskirche as representative of *Ablaß-Tafeln*. Created in the first half of the fifteenth century, this relief portrays the *Man of Sorrows* surrounded by the *Arma Christi*. The accompanying inscription informs the viewer that indulgence could be obtained by reciting three *Our Fathers* and *Hail Marys*. (*Intuens arma Christi devote dicendo ter pater noster et ave maria habet a papa Innocentio IV annos, a Petro III, a Leone II, a sancto Gregorio XL dies indulgenciarum*). Contemporary to the indulgenced panel from the Fritzlar Stiftskirche, another indulgenced panel was created for the Friedhof der Minoriten in Fritzlar. In the same church, Herm. Hankrat erected a relief of the Crucifixion with an indulgence inscription in 1510. "Ablaß (-Bild, -Brief, -Kanzel, -Tafel, -Urkunde)," in *Reallexikon zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 1 (Stuttgart, 1937), pp. 79–80.

[14] B. Dudik, "Über Ablaßtafeln," in *Sitzungsberichte der phil.-hist. Classe der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften*, vol. 58 (Vienna: C. Gerold's Sohn, 1868), p. 155.

[15] B. Dudik, "Über Ablaßtafeln," p. 156. Along with publicly displaying indulgences on the walls of the church, indulgences could be communicated through indulgence logs. This manner of compiling indulgence privileges into books likely informed the Indulgence Altarpieces or *Schrift-Tafeln* in Vienna. An indulgence catalogue of the Teutonic Knights in Vienna's archive provides direct evidence that this served as a

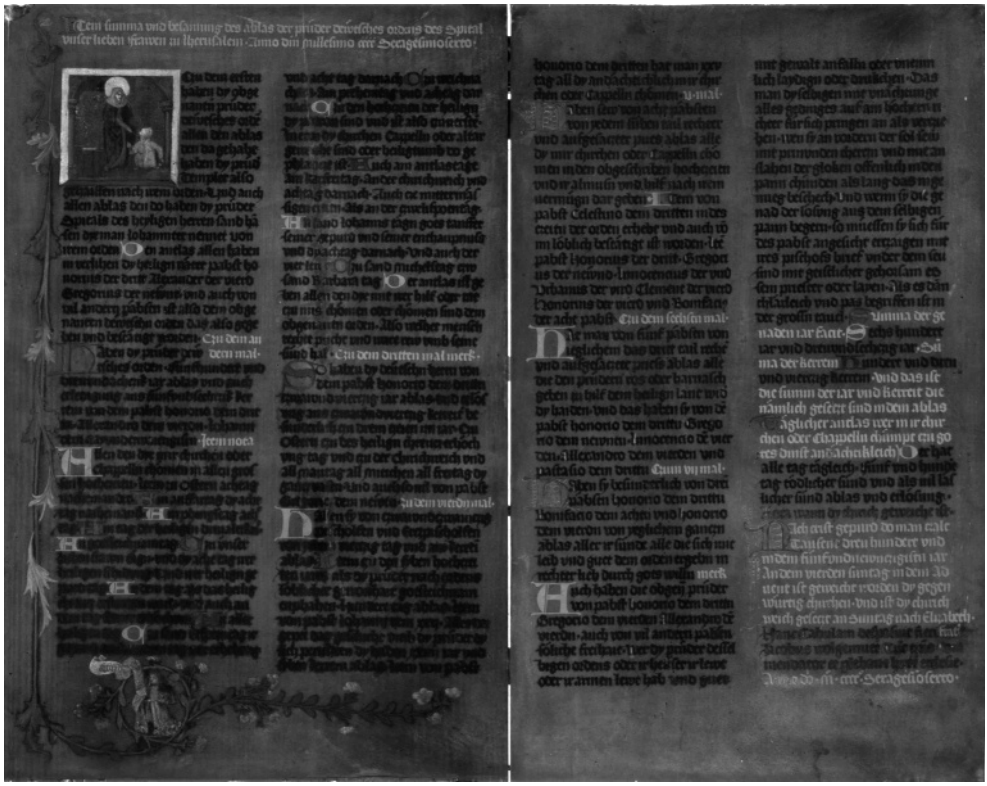

Fig. 9.2 *Indulgence Altarpiece in the Form of a Diptych*, 1466, panel, 61.5 × 77 cm. Photo: Museum and Treasury of the Teutonic Order, Vienna, by permission.

A second kind of *Ablaß-Tafel* also in the Museum and Treasury in Vienna was executed in 1513. (fig. 9.3) In the traditional form of a triptych, this panel has moveable wings. In its closed position the wings are divided into three parts with painted scenes of the Virgin at the top. On the left wing the scene of the Annunciation takes place before a curtained backdrop. Seated on a low bench or a stool, the Virgin turns to the Archangel who kneels before her with his hand extended in a greeting. In the right scene, the Virgin, Christ Child, and St. Anne are seated before a balustrade. Commissioned by the highest official in the Teutonic Order, the Grand Master, Albrecht von

model for the *Schrift-Tafeln* in the Treasury of St. Elizabeth's. Boockmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit," p. 52.

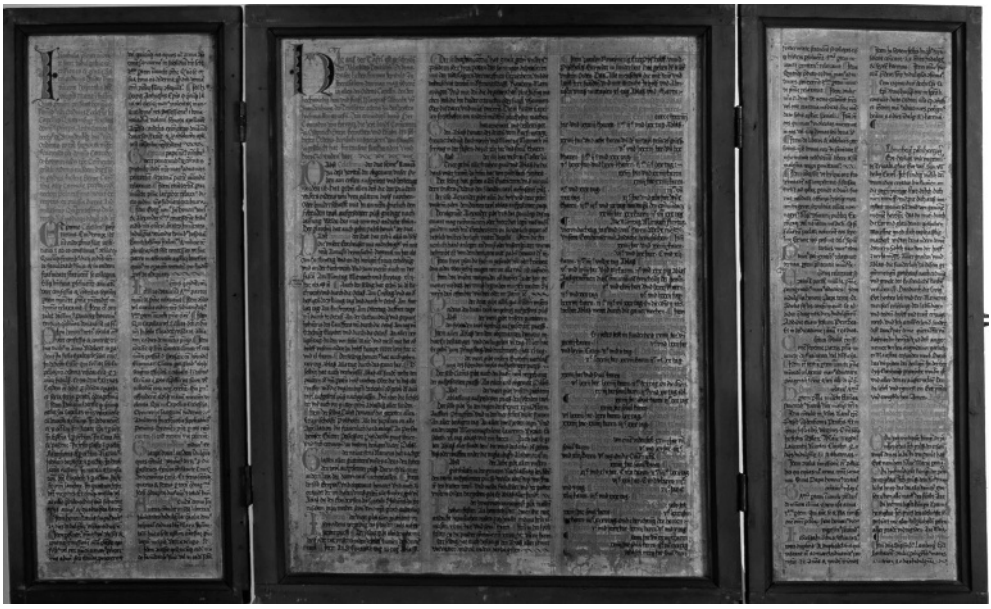

Fig. 9.3 *Indulgence Altarpiece in the Form of a Triptych*, 1513, panel, 83 × 67 cm. (closed), 83 × 136 cm. (open). Photo: Museum and Treasury of the Teutonic Order, Vienna, by permission.

Brandenburg-Asbach (r. 1511–1525), the two coats-of-arms painted at the bottom of the altarpiece represent his family (on the left) and his office (on the right).[16] The text, which separates the painted scenes from the coats-of-arms, alludes to what is on the interior of the altarpiece. The altarpiece's open position reveals columns of text, that enumerate the indulgence privileges of the Teutonic Order in both Latin and German. The final portion of the text organizes the particular indulgences associated with feast days in the form of a calendar.[17]

Listing the indulgences granted to the Teutonic Order was an important function of these works. In fact, the display of a particular church's indulgence privileges in the form of a panel is an identifying

[16] Hartmut Boockmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit vor der Reformation," in *Martin Luther und die Reformation in Deutschland. Ausstellung zum 500. Geburtstag Martin Luthers Veranstaltet vom Germanischen Nationalmuseum Nuremberg in Zusammenarbeit mit dem Verein für Reformationsgeschichte* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1983), p. 54.

[17] Boockmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit," p. 54.

feature of indulgenced panels or altarpieces.[18] The indulgenced altarpieces in Vienna are not the only surviving works that displayed the indulgence privileges of their church. A much earlier representation of the *Virgin Enthroned* from Halberstadt, not illustrated, also functioned as an advertisement for its church's indulgences.[19] Created in 1300, this work was located on the southeast portal of the Church of Our Lady in Halberstadt. The indulgence inscription promises indulgence on the feasts of the Virgin.[20]

Other German altarpieces, contemporary with the mid-fifteenth-century examples, have been identified as indulgenced panels. In contrast to the indulgenced images introduced at the beginning of this essay, which had a fairly limited iconography and were tied to a specific indulgence, there is considerable variation among the *Ablaß-Tafeln* in terms of their subject matter and the content of their inscription. In comparison to the panels from the Treasury of the Teutonic Order, here the painted scene rather than the text plays a more significant role. For example, in the *Epitaph of Dorothea Schürstab*, which depicts the Mass of St. Gregory, the painted scene fills the entire panel. (fig. 9.4) Below the main image kneels the donor figure, Dorothea Schürstab, the Subpriorin of the Dominican convent, which was dedicated to St. Catherine, in Nuremberg.[21] The accompanying indulgence inscription promises the same indulgence, normally obtained only in Rome, to whoever says an *Our Father* or a *Hail Mary* before the image.[22]

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[18] Iindulgenced altarpieces could act as a "register of the indulgence privileges of a particular church in the form of a panel displayed on the wall or portal of that church." Schmitt, "Ablaß (-Bild, -Brief, -Kanzel, -Tafel, -Urkunde)," p. 80. According to Schmitt, *Ablaß-Tafeln* could function on a variety of levels. For example, an image of the *Man of Sorrows* in the Church of the Minorites in Fritzlar also acted as an epitaph. Commissioned in 1463, the deceased, Dekans Joh. Kirchain, is portrayed kneeling at the foot of the Man of Sorrows on the upper border of the indulgence inscription.

[19] Schmitt, "Ablaß (-Bild, -Brief, -Kanzel, -Tafel, -Urkunde)," p. 80.

[20] Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative*, p. 24, n. 8.

[21] Dorothea, who came from a noble Nuremberg family and was a Dominican nun for thirty nine years, passed away on March 29, 1475 at the age of 59. *Anno Domini MCCCC im LXXV jar am vierten Ostertag starb Schwester Dorothea Schürstabin, Subpriorin des Kloster, der Gott genad und allen glaubigen Seelen*. Boockmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit," p. 54.

[22] Wer diese figure kniend ert mit einem pater noster und ave Maria, der hat von der erscheinung, die sant Gregorius erschain in ainer kirchhen, dy heist portacrucis, den selben ablas der selben kirchen, des ist 30 000 iar ablas… Boockmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit," p. 54.

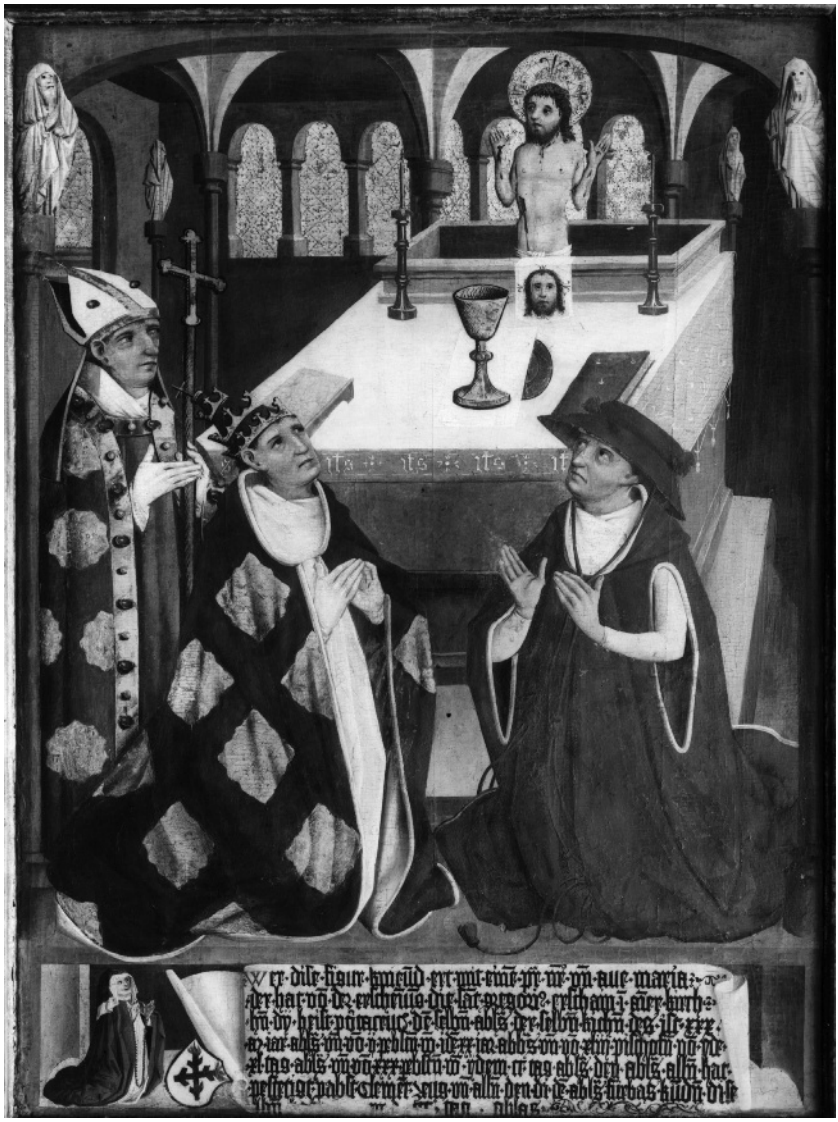

Fig. 9.4 Master of the Velden High Altar, *Epitaph of Dorothea Schürstab*, *c.* 1475, panel, 128 × 92 cm. Photo: Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg, by permission.

Like the *Epitaph of Dorothea Schürstab* the inscription on the *Indulgence Altarpiece* from Schwäbisch Gmünd, not illustrated, occupies far less space than the imagery. In contrast to the more predictable subject of the *Epitaph*, however, the altarpiece does not depict a religious subject per se, but rather the activities surrounding the rebuilding of the church at Schwäbisch Gmünd, parts of which were destroyed in 1497.[23] In the left foreground, a mason dresses a block with a chisel and sledge hammer, while next to him, another worker transports mortar in a basket and, to the right, a crane hoists blocks to the upper parts of the church.[24] The indulgence inscription, located in a decorative cartouche at the top of the panel, states that anybody who donates to the rebuilding of the church will receive 3,320 days indulgence.[25]

Although the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* has never been identified as an *Ablaß-Tafel* or indulgenced panel, it possesses the general characteristics of this category. Like the other indulgenced panels it includes an indulgence inscription and was intended as a public monument. Moreover, documentary evidence supports the idea that the Tiefenbronn parish church, for which the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* was created, had indulgence privileges. For instance, a 1445 report tells of a group of soldiers, who while resting in Tiefenbronn, obtained indulgence at the church there.[26]

The Indulgence Quest: Benefits for the Believer and the Church

The development of indulgenced altarpieces in the Late Gothic period underscores their popularity and widespread availability at the time. By the Late Middle Ages, indulgences were understood as promises for

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[23] Hartmut Boockmann, "Über Ablaß-'Medien'," *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 34 (1983), 713.

[24] Boockmann, "Über Ablaß-'Medien'," p. 714.

[25] *Alle, die ir hilf und steür Raichend zuo diszem wurdigen gotts Hausz, die erlangend von vill cardineln, legatten, ertzbischoffen, bischoffen in ainer sum ablas dreydaussent-dreyhundert und zwaintzig tag 153 [!] Anno 1612 renoviert*. The cartouche was added at a later time, but likely reflects the original text of the announcement. Boockmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit," p. 53.

[26] "Söldnertruppen, die von den städten gegen die Armagnaken geworben waren, in dem markgräfischen Tiefenbronn am Kirch weihtag Rast hielten, wobei ein Teil den Ablaß in der dortigen Kirche holte…" in Gerhard Piccard, *Der Magdalenenaltar des >Lukas Moser< in Tiefenbronn, Ein Beitrag zur europäischen Kunstgeschichte mit einer Untersuchung die Tiefenbronner Patrozinien und ihre (Hirsauer) Herkunft* (Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1969), p. 52.

the remission of the temporal punishment due for sin and were considered as payments from the church's Treasury of Merits.[27] The belief that temporal punishment was the equivalent of Purgatory contributed to the widespread popularity of indulgences. Purgatory, an intermediate place between one's death and the Last Judgment, was one to be bypassed.[28] Not only was it a place where an individual would be subjected to various trials, but the punishments experienced in Purgatory resembled those of Hell, including the torments of fire and ice.[29] Indulgences provided the laity with the opportunity to reduce the amount of time they had to spend in Purgatory by performing prescribed pious acts.

While the laity sought indulgences to avoid the torments of Purgatory, churches often petitioned for indulgence privileges to help finance building campaigns or maintenance. The importance of the indulgence for the art and architecture of the Late Gothic period has been well-established. According to Nikolaus Paulus, "The building and decoration of churches in the late Middle Ages procured more indulgences than for any other goal."[30] Bern's Münster and the Kaiserdom of Speyer are two of the more well-known examples of churches erected through the sale of indulgences in German-speaking lands. It was not only the great cathedrals, but also the humble parish churches that were built and maintained through indulgences.[31] A quote from a Mecklenberg theologian reflected the vast amount of building achieved through the sale of indulgences when he wrote that, "every sinking tower, every crumbling stone, was dressed and set by indulgences."[32]

Despite the increasing availability of indulgences in the Late Middle Ages obtaining indulgence privileges or earning an indulgence required

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[27] Robert W. Shaffern, "The Medieval Theology of Indulgences," in *Promissory Notes on the Treasury of Merits*, edited by R.N. Swanson (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2006), p. 11.

[28] Jacques le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 6.

[29] Le Goff, *Birth of Purgatory*, p. 7.

[30] Nikolaus Paulus, *Geschichte des Ablaßes am Ausgange des Mittelalters*, vol. 3, *Geschichte des Ablaßes im Mittelalter* (Paderborn: F. Schöningh, 1923), p. 433.

[31] Robert Shaffern, *The Penitents' Treasury: Indulgences in Latin Christendom, 1175–1375* (Scranton: The University of Scranton Press, 2007), p. 58.

[32] Nikolaus Paulus, *Indulgences as a Social Factor in the Middle Ages*, translated by J. Elliot Ross (New York: The Devin-Adair Company), p. 35.

effort.[33] Given the amount of money that a church stood to gain from indulgences for its building or decorative program, it is not surprising that many churches petitioned for indulgence privileges. The power to grant indulgences to a particular institution or individual resided ultimately with the Pope, who could transfer the authority to bishops.[34] A bishop's power to authorize an indulgence was more limited than the Pope's. For example, only the Pope could grant a full or plenary indulgence, while a bishop could grant only partial remissions. Most bishops could only grant forty days indulgence.[35] In the case of a papal indulgence, churches or individuals often employed agents who negotiated the indulgence grant for them at the papal curia. The process could be lengthy and often required a payment of appropriate fees.[36] Securing a grant from a bishop was much less formal. As a result, vast numbers of indulgences issued by bishops were not documented.[37]

While a church had to petition the Pope or a bishop for the right to offer an indulgence, for the individual, obtaining a remission or an indulgence, involved sincere remorse for one's sins and following the terms or stipulations of the indulgence. Penitence was the foundation for an indulgence, making it valid only "after interior conversion had prompted such regret for sin that the penitent sought absolution in sacramental confession."[38] Depending on the type of indulgence, other pious acts were also required. Charitable indulgences, which helped to finance a good work or something that benefitted the public commonwealth, was the most common type available in the late medieval period. A surviving indulgence letter from the parish church of St. Lorenz in Nuremberg, bearing the seals of twenty cardinals, states that 100 days indulgence could be obtained when the church was visited on a designated feast and something given for the building or decoration

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[33] According to Hartmut Boockmann, indulgence privileges in the fifteenth century were pervasive. *Die Stadt im späten Mittelalter* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1986), p. 263. He estimated that indulgences were so common that during this time period "nearly every believer could obtain several." Boockmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit," p. 52.

[34] Shaffern, "Medieval Theology," p. 29.

[35] Shaffern, "Medieval Theology," p. 30.

[36] R.N. Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England: Passports to Paradise?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 120–21.

[37] Since indulgences did not address property rights in any way, record-keepers did not see the need to record them. For more information on the low number of surviving Episcopal grants, see Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England*, pp. 123–24.

[38] Shaffern, "Medieval Theology," p. 14.

of the church.[39] Charitable indulgences usually involved performing a good work, which included a visit to a church and/or a contribution to the building of a church or hospital.[40]

Advertising Indulgences

Because the amount of pilgrims who visited and donated money largely measured the success of an indulgence, churches employed a variety of means to publicize their indulgences to a much wider audience. Important churches such as Bern's Münster, dedicated to Saint Vincent, and the Frauenkirche in Munich made their indulgence privileges known through the distribution of copies of the letters of indulgence. In Bern, one thousand copies of the indulgence were distributed as far as Cologne.[41] Informing neighboring dioceses of indulgence privileges was also a strategy employed by Munich's Frauenkirche. Eight priests with copies of the papal bull rode out to nearby dioceses, including Bamberg and Würzburg.[42] The invention of the printing press greatly aided in the distribution of indulgences making it more cost-effective "dispens[ing] with the army of scribes whose wages cut into the church's profits."[43]

Recruiting powerful preachers to promote an indulgence was another way in which church officials attracted people to the church. Speyer cathedral, granted a plenary indulgence in 1451 by Nicholas V, promoted it by sending preachers to the dioceses of Speyer, Worms, Strasbourg and Basel.[44] For the indulgence available at Bern, the city recruited the well-known preacher Johannes Heynlin to explain the indulgence bull to people and to encourage them to repent.[45] He was hired to preach the indulgence for three consecutive years, a testament

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[39] The letter is dated March 28, 1476. The other parish church in Nuremberg, St. Sebald, possessed similar indulgence privileges. Boockmann, "Über 'Ablaß-Medien,'" p. 711.

[40] If the conscience was burdened with a mortal sin, repentance and confession also were required to obtain indulgence. Paulus, *Indulgences*, p. 15.

[41] Paulus, *Indulgences*, p. 27.

[42] Nikolaus Paulus, *Indulgences*, p. 39. Special messengers dispatched by the City Council also carried invitations to surrounding cities.

[43] Janet Ing, "The Mainz indulgences of 1454/5: a review of recent scholarship," *British Library Journal* 9/1 (Spring 1983), p. 17.

[44] Franz Joseph Mone (ed.), *Quellensammlung der badischen Landesgeschichte*, vol. 1 (Karlsruhe: Macklot, 1848), p. 386 ff.

[45] Paulus, *Indulgences*, p. 27.

to his success. Reinforcing the preaching of indulgence and the circulation of letters of indulgence, Bern displayed the indulgence available there in large letters in Latin and German on the church doors.[46]

The tremendous numbers of pilgrims who visited the aforementioned churches to obtain indulgence is testimony to the effectiveness of this advertising. In the first year 65,000 pilgrims came to Munich. For the three years that the Frauenkirche offered their indulgence 123,700 pilgrims visited.[47] While it is only possible to assess the number of pilgrims for a limited number of churches, the scale of specific indulgence campaigns is also gauged by the numbers of priests needed to hear confession. According to a chronicler of the Speyer indulgence, Eikhardt Artzt, there were so many pilgrims visiting the church that between fifty and one hundred priests were needed to listen to confessions.[48]

While larger churches with more significant indulgences could afford to hire preachers and print and distribute copies of indulgence letters, such measures were beyond the means of more modest churches. Advertising still played a critical role. According to Shaffern, "medieval Catholics knew best those pardons available at their own parish church."[49] On a local or parish level, publicity primarily meant "a permanently visible statement of the indulgence offered" and these were displayed on many different types of objects.[50] Based on the material remains of an indulgence letter from Nuremberg, Boockmann concluded that the document was repeatedly used to show the indulgence privileges held by that church. The letter exhibited not only excessive wear and tear, but also had holes at the top, suggesting that it was openly displayed in a plaque-like fashion.[51] Public display of indulgence letters was a common practice. Judith Oliver noted nail holes across the top of the indulgence letter from the Herkenrode Abbey

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[46] Franz Joseph Mone (ed.), *Badisches Archiv für Vaterlandskunde*, vol. 2 (Karlsruhe: Gottlieb Braun, 1827, p. 232 ff.

[47] Paulus, *Indulgences*, p. 39. The numbers of visitors to Munich's Frauenkirche for its indulgence were recorded by the town clerk, Dr. Han Kirchmaier. During the indulgence period, church officials were able to count the number of visitors by having them drop a pea into a bucket. Karl August Muffat, *Baugeschichte des Domes zu unserer Lieben Frau in München* (Munich: Finsterlin, 1868), p. 21 ff.

[48] Mone, *Badisches Archiv*, p. 232 ff.

[49] Shaffern, *The Penitents' Treasury*, p. 63.

[50] R.N. Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England*, p. 162.

[51] Boockmann, "Über Ablaß-'Medien'," p. 711.

suggesting that it was originally hung on a wooden roller, presumably in the church.[52]

Another more permanent method of displaying indulgence privileges can be seen in the Schäfer Chapel at St. Wolfgang's in Rothenburg, where, chiseled into the wall, is a list of the numerous feasts on which indulgence could be received. These included not only general feasts (Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, All Saints Day, the Immaculate Conception and the Annunciation), but the feasts of two specific saints: the patron of the church, St. Wolfgang and St. Bartholomew.[53]

The *Ablaß-Tafeln* in Vienna, the *Epitaph of Dorothea Schürstab*, the Indulgenced Altarpiece from Schwäbisch Gmünd, and the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* are all examples of indulgenced altarpieces used by smaller, local churches to communicate specific information about their indulgences. Just how widespread this practice was is difficult to establish. Scholars have suggested that the Reformation could account for the low number of extant indulgenced altarpieces.[54] As concrete manifestations of a practice so sweepingly condemned by reformers indulgenced altarpieces probably were singled out for destruction or removal.[55] It also might be difficult to recognize a work as an indulgenced panel if its inscription was removed during the Reformation.[56]

While the indulgenced altarpieces discussed in this essay all originated in German-speaking lands, it is likely that similar altarpieces were used elsewhere in Europe. In the advertising of indulgences, English churches used many of the same methods as existed in Germany.

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[52] Judith Oliver, "The Herkenrode Indulgence, Avignon, and Pre-Eyckian painting of the mid-fourteenth century Low Countries," in *Flanders in a European Perspective. Manuscript Illumination Around 1400 in Flanders and Abroad*. Proceedings of the International Colloquium, Leuven, 7–10 September 1993 (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1995), p. 190. In England, some testators who secured pardons displayed the original documents. Swanson, *Indulgences in Lat Medieval England*, p. 162.

[53] The inscription states: "Romisch ablas uf den cristag, ostertag, pfingstag, dinstag nach Bartholomei, s. Wolfgang, allerheiligen, unser frauven conepcionis (Mariä Empfängnis), anunciacionis (Mariä Verkündung) iglichs fest 12 c(aren; carena 40tätiges Fasten bzw. Dessen Erlaß) und 40 tag, zu den tag der kirwei (Kirchweihe) 24 c(aren) 80 tag, durch daz gantz ior all tag 40 tag (Ablaß)." Boockmann, "Über Ablaß-'Medien'," p. 720, figs. 4/5.

[54] Dudik, "Über Ablasstafeln," p. 155.

[55] For other explanations for the low survival rate of indulgenced panels see Boockmann, "Über Schrifttafeln," p. 215. For information on the affects of the Reformation on art in England see R.N. Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England*, pp. 107–8.

[56] Boockmann, "Über 'Ablaß-Medien,'" p. 718.

Similar to the carved indulgence inscription on the Schäfer chapel at St. Wolfgang's, in England, indulgence inscriptions were placed on churches. In the case of St. Helen's church at Abindgdon, Berkshire the indulgence inscription was placed on the ceiling.[57] In Swanson's study of indulgences, it is argued that art and architecture played a significant role in the promulgation and sustaining of indulgences. Especially at the local level, a variety of objects were used to display a church's indulgence privileges, including doors and tombstones. As in Germany, original indulgence documents were also placed on display in the church.[58]

Indulgence Stipulations and the Display of Feast Days

In the context of advertising indulgences the main function of the indulgence inscription on indulgence panels or altarpieces was to inform parishioners and pilgrims of the indulgence available at that particular institution. As such the indulgenced altarpiece functioned as an advertisement whose purpose was to encourage worshippers to visit the church. According to indulgence letters, such as the one from St. Lorenz, indulgences could only be obtained on church feast days. The feasts specified in letters of indulgence frequently consisted both of general and local feasts. Among the most common feasts were the church dedication day and the feast of Corpus Christi. The general feasts listed in an indulgence letter, which Nicholas of Cusa distributed, were Christmas, Pentecost, and several Marian feasts.[59] In contrast to the standard general feasts, the local feasts, celebrating local saints, varied widely from one religious establishment to another. St. Wolfgang held a place of special significance at the Schäfer chapel in Rothenburg, and Lambert, Hubert, and Deodigne were celebrated at the Herkenrode Abbey.[60]

The requirement of church visitation on sanctioned feast days explains why some of the indulgence altarpieces and other media list particular feast days in their inscriptions. It was essential to know on which days the indulgence could be earned. The Schäfer chapel at

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[57] Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England*, p. 107.
[58] Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England*, p. 162.
[59] Boockmann, *Die Stadt*, 267.
[60] The Herkenrode indulgence also listed numerous Marian feasts. Oliver, "The Herkenrode Indulgence," 188 n. 4.

St. Wolfgang's highlights this practice. Depicting the Virgin, the indulgenced image from Halberstadt lists the feasts of the Virgin on which indulgence could be received. The linking of indulgences with specific feast days is also seen in the later *Indulgence Altarpiece* in Vienna. At the end of the altarpiece's text indulgences are listed according to feast days in the form of a calendar. Preceding the list of feasts, the text announces that the information represents the sum of all of the indulgences given for particular days. Beginning with Christmas, the entry for each feast day includes the amount of indulgence available on that feast day.[61]

The listing of feasts in both letters of indulgence and on various types of *Ablaß-Medien* provides insight into the inclusion of individual saints' names on the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece*, a connection which has not been previously noted. These names specify the local feasts on which indulgence was available at Tiefenbronn. Why the indulgence inscription on the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* only listed the names of the local feasts and not all of the general feasts on which indulgence could be received is probably due to its smaller format. Only the most pertinent information could be placed into the small border. While the public would have been aware of the general feasts, which had few regional variations, local saints varied greatly. Simply put, because of the site-specific nature of the local feasts, it was vital that this information be communicated in the limited space available for the indulgence inscription on the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece*.

"Pious Acts": Donating, Praying, Kneeling

While the presence of indulgenced inscriptions on altarpieces, in general, and more particularly the reference to specific feasts, reflects the ability of medieval art to physically draw people to a particular destination, indulgenced altarpieces helped shape the viewer's response or actions. Although no documents survive describing what took place when a viewer encountered an indulgenced image, indulgence bulls themselves reveal what was expected of a viewer in response to an indulgence inscription and image. The visual and textual prompts depicted on indulgence altarpieces reinforced the terms of indulgence and provide insight into the devotional acts.

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[61] B. Dudik, "Über Ablasßtafeln," pp. 171–73.

For charitable indulgences, visiting a church on a designated feast day was essential, but it was not enough to fulfill the indulgence requirements as stipulated in letters of indulgence. Most required "pious acts" which varied depending on the needs of the institutions. One stipulation frequently tied to charitable indulgences was a donation to the construction or decoration of the church offering the indulgence. The relationship between church building and indulgences is found in the Indulgence Panel from Schwäbisch Gmünd where both the text of the indulgence inscription and the subject matter of the altarpiece reminded the visitor that a donation to the church was mandatory. The text promised that the collective sum of 3,320 days remission would be granted to whoever donated help or money towards the church's reconstruction.

Beyond the concrete example of the *Indulgenced Altarpiece* from Schwäbisch Gmünd, it is likely that the indulgence inscription on any of the altarpieces would have prompted indulgence seeking visitors to make donations. The charitable indulgence available at St. Lorenz stipulated that visitors contribute to the church and most charitable indulgences were granted to churches for their construction and decoration.

Beyond the required visit and donation, some of the indulgenced altarpieces also encouraged the viewer to pray. The inscription from a stone relief in Fritzlar directs the viewer to recite three Our Fathers and three Hail Marys before the image.[62] And the *Epitaph of Dorothea Schürstab*'s indulgence states that whoever kneels before the image and says an *Our Father* and *Hail Mary* will receive the same indulgence available at the Porta Crucis in Rome.[63] The inscription instructs the devotee to kneel in imitation of Dorothea's position in the painting. The kneeling donor thus served as a model for viewers of the painting.

While only a few of the aforementioned altarpieces identified specific prayers to be recited, it is fair to assume that the indulgence inscriptions on the *Ablaß-Tafeln*, even if specific prayers were not identified as with the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece*, would have prompted the beholder to pray. Reinforcing the association between prayer and indulgence, several indulgenced altarpieces refer to the recital of a

[62] Schmitt, "Ablaß (-Bild, -Brief, -Kanzel, -Tafel, -Urkunde)," p. 80.
[63] Boockmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit," p. 54.

prayer or prayers as a prerequisite for receiving indulgence, echoing the frequent stipulation found in letters of indulgence. Although these indulgences were attached to specific prayers, not specific images, we may still assume that visitors would say the prayers in front of the image even if not instructed to do so by the inscriptions.

In Walter Gibson's essay in this anthology, *Prayers and Promises: The Interactive Indulgence Print in the Later Middle Ages*, the author reinforces the strong connection between indulgence images and prayer. Similar to the some of the indulgenced altarpieces described here, many indulgence prints included the prayers to be recited and the number and years of the remission. Gibson also argues that even without a specific inscription that some prints became the focal point of indulgenced prayers. Not only would certain subjects spontaneously encourage the recitation of indulgenced prayers, but the very mention of indulgence, as on the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece*, would have had the same effect.

Indulgenced altarpieces informed the viewer of the specific days on which indulgence could be received, prompting them to engage in the pious acts necessary to receive indulgence. A donation to the church, the recital of prayers, and kneeling are all participatory acts of devotion. In examining the imagery of some of the indulgenced altarpieces it becomes clear that the viewer was also encouraged to physically interact with the work in order to earn the indulgence.

The strong relationship between an altarpiece's closed position and open position has been the subject of frequent discussion in the literature on the function of altarpieces, especially for fifteenth and early sixteenth century triptychs from northern Europe.[64] While only a small number of the indulgence altarpieces are triptychs, the extant examples support the interrelationship between the work's exterior and interior views. The text on the exterior of the *Ablaß-Tafel* in Vienna makes explicit reference to the information contained in the altarpiece's interior. Contained in the fields between the images and the coats-of-arms the text announces that what is inside is the "sum of the indulgences of the Teutonic order."[65] Only upon opening the wings would the viewer find the detailed list of the individual indulgences. That the viewer

[64] Shirly Neilsen Blum, *Early Netherlandish Triptychs: A Study in Patronage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).

[65] *Summa des Ablass der Teutschen herren spitals unser lieben frawen zu Jherusalem*. Boockmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit," p. 52.

Fig. 9.5 *Votive Triptych*, *c.* 1490/95. Panel, 40.6 × 29.6 cm (closed), 40.6 × 59 cm (open). Photo: Germanisches Nationalmusem, Nuremberg, by permission.

would have been prompted to open the wings on certain feast days is written on the right wing in the closed position.[66]

Another example of the interactive relationship between an altarpiece's exterior and interior is the Votive Triptych from Augsburg which replicated the Madonna of Santa Maria del Popolo.[67] (fig. 9.5) Located below an image of the *Annunciation* in its closed position the text refers to an indulgence granted by Pope Sixtus IV. The inscription states that whoever said the prayer with devotion would receive 11,000

[66] Boockmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit," p. 52. *Quam (tabulam) certis temporibus videbis apertam*. B. Dudik, "Über Ablaßtafeln," p. 160.

[67] Sixtus IV erected the church of Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome. The image of the Madonna located there was accepted as the image of the Virgin painted by St. Luke. This is confirmed in the inscription on the frame surrounding the Virgin in the altarpiece's open position. Boockmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit," pp. 49–50.

years indulgence.[68] The text further encourages the beholder to open the wings of the altarpiece, explaining that the prayer is contained on the interior "hir in geschriben steht." Upon opening the wings the viewer would recite Sixtus' prayer, located on the center panel directly below the sacred image of the Madonna of Santa Maria del Popolo, and receive the indulgence. The inscription emphasizes that Sixtus' prayer was available to everybody "allen menschen" as many times as they recited the prayer.[69]

Summary

Indulgence Altarpieces or *Ablaß-Tafeln*, used to display the indulgence privileges of their host institution, interacted with their Late Gothic audience on a variety of levels. First and foremost, they encouraged pilgrims to visit the church on designated feast days. Second, the *Ablaß-Tafeln* prompted the viewer to engage in a variety of devotional activities. We can gauge from contemporary letters of indulgence, which stipulated certain devotional practices, how a viewer would have interacted with an indulgence altarpiece or what behaviors would have been encouraged by the altarpiece. Details of the imagery and inscription provided cues to the viewer to engage in the pious acts dictated by letters of indulgence. Among the acts of piety that were performed to receive indulgence were the donation to the church, kneeling, recital of prayers, and physically opening the altarpiece. Returning to the *St. Magdalene Altarpiece* by Lucas Moser, in placing it in the context of other indulgence altarpieces, its function is no longer shrouded in mystery. Similar to other indulgence altarpieces it informed viewers that the parish church at Tiefenbronn, for which it was created, had indulgence privileges and that along with the general feasts, visitation to the church on the feast of Mary Magdalene, Anthony, and Erhard would procure indulgence.

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[68] *Bapst Sixtus der vierd hat gemacht in seiner kranckheit dis gebet von unser lieben frawen, hir in geschriben steht, und bestet davon gegeben allen menschen, als offt sy das sprechen mit andacht, aylfftausend (11,000) jar ablas*. Boockmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit," pp. 49–50.

[69] Boockmann, "Kirche und Frömmigkeit," p. 50.

10. WHO SEES CHRIST? AN ALABASTER PANEL OF THE MASS OF ST. GREGORY

Susan Leibacher Ward

Seeing Christ was a fundamental part of the fabric of late medieval devotion rich in associations and implications. An understanding of this large and complex phenomenon can be focused through the careful examination of a single fifteenth-century English alabaster relief panel which represents the Mass of St. Gregory that presently is a part of the collections of the Brooklyn Museum of Art.[1] **(fig. 10.1)** The Mass of St. Gregory is an image in which Pope Gregory has a vision of Christ as the Man of Sorrows while the pope celebrates the Eucharist. While Masses of St Gregory often emphasized empathetic identification with the suffering of the Man of Sorrows, meaning is created through a different strategy in the Brooklyn panel. Here, gazes, both the artistically depicted gazes within the panel and the actual gaze of the medieval viewer, create the emotive connection to Christ. Therefore in this example it is looking at Christ and having him look back at you, connecting to him eye to eye, that pushes and pulls the medieval viewer.

The Brooklyn panel, a rectangle (21 1/2 by 10 1/4 inches) carved in relief, shows the Visionary Mass in two parallel, interlocking realms. The figures are not depicted in a particularly naturalistic style, but are represented instead in a style typical for English alabasters characterized by figures with small heads, bulging eyes and bodies often described as doll-like. The salient parts of the work would have been brightly painted and gilded, offering a contrast with the smooth

[1] The Mass of St. Gregory is a fifteenth-century English alabaster in the collection of the Brooklyn Museum of Art (accession number, 33.393). Its precise dimensions are: H. 21 1/2, W. 10 1/4, D. 2 1/4 in. (54.6 × 26 × 5.7 cm). Bibliography for this work includes: Margaret Scheinin, "A 15th Century English Alabaster," *Brooklyn Museum Bulletin* 10 (June, 1949), pp. 11–17; Augusta Tavender, "Medieval English Alabasters in American Museums I," *Speculum* 30 (1955), 68, no. 43; Francis W. Cheetham, *Alabaster Images of Medieval England* (Woodbridge: The Association for Cultural Exchange and Boydell Press, 2003), p. 43, no. 3; and Joan Holladay and Susan Ward, eds., *Gothic Sculpture in America* III. *Museums in New York and Pennsylvania*. Forthcoming, 2011.

Fig. 10.1 The Mass of St. Gregory, fifteenth century, alabaster, Brooklyn Museum of Art. Photo: the Brooklyn Museum of Art, by permission.

translucent alabaster left undecorated in the figures' faces and hands. The action depicted occurs predominantly parallel to the picture plane and there is no deep recession into space. The setting would originally have been indicated by the characteristic green daisy pattern covering the lower areas of the composition, visible now only in minute traces, in spite of the purported interior location of the action. In one realm Pope Gregory stands in front of an altar with a book and chalice elevating a large round host. St. Gregory is attended by a deacon, vested in dalmatic and alb, and holding a candle. He grasps the edge of the pope's mantel. Insignia of papal power are emphasized in the composition as the papal tiara sits on the ground in front of the altar and behind Gregory are a group of three cardinals, indicated by their short *cappas* and the large *galeri* with tasseled cords on their heads. One cardinal holds a double or patriarchal cross, by the fifteenth century a recognized symbol of archbishops and patriarchs. The second realm shows Christ standing on the altar. Between the altar's standard fittings of chalice and book, the haloed Christ stands between two angels with a small architectural canopy placed above them. Christ wears a *torse*, or twisted wreath, on his head, and a loincloth as he does in other alabaster representations of Passion scenes. The angels hold back his mantel so that he may gesture to the wound on his chest. Christ and his attending angels are depicted in a diminutive scale, about three-quarters of the scale of the other figures. This difference in scale suggests that this trio exists in a different environment from the other figures.

The idea of two separate realms or compositions in the alabaster is reinforced by the fact that no one in the realm of Pope Gregory appears to see Christ and the angels who, in turn, do not seem to see the Pope and his entourage. Although there are no pupils in the eyes of the figures their gazes may be followed by looking at the position of the eyes and the placement of the heads of each of the figures. Pope Gregory tilts his head straight back and looks at the large host in his hands. The attendant behind him also follows that gaze. The cardinals are particularly instructive in understanding the composition because their downward focused eyes, turned heads and lowered chins make it clear that they are looking at the host in Gregory's hands. Were they viewing Christ himself they would have to turn their heads sharply to their left. The cardinal in the middle of the composition holding the patriarchal cross would have to tilt his head upwards to see Christ rather than downwards towards the host as he does. The second realm

is equally self-contained. The two angels both turn their heads to Christ and look slightly downwards towards him. They do not appear to see anyone else in the composition.

Where does Christ himself look? His head is held at an even height and is turned slightly to his right. His gaze looks outward rather than towards anyone else in the image. As we will discuss later, this relief was probably a central panel in an altarpiece, so that Christ's slightly skewed gaze would still have taken in most viewers except those at his extreme left. In the Brooklyn panel there is much missed opportunity for visual connection between the participants. If the saintly pope and his ecclesiastical attendants do not see Christ on the altar to whom does he appear? It seems clear that it is the viewer who experiences this parallel universe. The work allows the viewer to have a double view, to participate in a narrative where Pope Gregory celebrates the mass and also to view something more; Christ himself present on the altar. Here the viewer is provided with a delicious omniscience.[2] He or she knows something, sees something, and is able to connect to something, beyond the awareness of the characters within the image. Christ in the Brooklyn panel, by looking at the viewer while the ecclesiastics go on about their business more or less unaware of him, pulls at the viewer by its compositional nature.

The subject of the Brooklyn alabaster, the Mass of St. Gregory, is often interpreted by scholars as a paradigmatic expression of the late medieval understanding of seeing and piety since such images show both the celebration of the Eucharist and its underlying meaning as the body and blood of Christ.[3] Although this visual image appears

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[2] In the Introduction to his edited collection of essays, *Visuality Before and Beyond the Renaissance: Seeing as Others Saw* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 9, Robert Nelson argues that to be omniscient is a phenomenon of modernity and it is the lack of omniscience which may be said to characterize the diverse experiences of seeing which occurred before the Renaissance. However, I argue in this study that it is the god-like extension of visual experience engendered by this work which makes it so effective in drawing in the viewer.

[3] There is a diverse group of late medieval images of the Mass of St. Gregory including amongst others, a feather mosaic of the subject made in colonial Mexico around 1539 and presently in the collection of the Musée des Jacobins in Auch, France. There is also a large bibliography on images of the subject including: H. Thurston, "The Mass of St. Gregory," *The Month* 112 (1908), pp. 303–19; J.A. Endres, "Die Darstellung der Gregoriusmesse im Mittelalter," *Zeitschrift für christliche Kunst*, 30 (1917), pp. 146–56; Erwin Panosfky, "Imago Pietatis, in *Festscrhft für Max J. Friedlander* (Leipzig: E.A. Seemann, 1927), pp. 261–308; J. Dupont, "La Messe de Saint Grégoire," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 6e per., tomb VI 73e année (Nov. 1931), pp. 284–88; J. Dupont, "Musée

first around 1400 and disappears around 1550 or 1600, its purported source is a vision of Christ that Pope Gregory the Great (r. 590–604) had while celebrating Mass in Rome. Although there are several early literary hints or parts of the story, they do not correspond directly to its appearance in the great flourishing in the visual arts of the fifteenth century. Johannes Diaconus' *Vita Sancti Gregorii Magni* of the ninth century and the writings of Paulus Diaconus about Pope Gregory refer to Eucharistic Miracles.[4] A particularly vivid Eucharistic miracle occurs in the Life of St. Gregory found in the *Golden Legend* of *c.* 1280. A woman receiving communion from Pope Gregory mocked the reality of the presence of Christ in the bread. Gregory prayed and "when he rose, he found the particle of the bread changed into flesh in the shape of a finger."[5] This miracle reconverted the woman. These

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de Calais. La Messe de saint Grégoire," *Bulletin des Musées de France* (April 1934), pp. 86–87; R. Berliner, "Arma Christi," *Münchner Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst* ser. 3, 6 (1955), pp. 35–152; M. Lorenz, "Die Gregoriusmesse: Enstehung und Ikonographie (Ph.D. diss., Innsbruck, 1956); Comte J. de Borchgrave d'Altene, "La Messe de saint Grégoire, Étude iconographique," *Bulletin des Musées royaux des beaux-arts*: *Bulletin Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten* 8 1–2 (March-June, 1959), pp. 3–34; Carlo Bertelli, "The Image of Pity in Santa Croce in Gerusalemme," in *Essays in the History of Art Presented to Rudolf Wittkower*, eds. Douglas Fraser, Howard Hibbard and Milton J. Lewine (London: Phaidon, 1967), pp. 40–55; E. Breitenbach, "Israhel van Meckenem's Man of Sorrows," *Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress*, 31 (1974), pp. 21–26; C. Puglisi, "The Mass of St. Gregory and Cerano's Varese Altarpiece," *Marsyas*, 19 (1977–78), pp. 11–15; Ute Westfehling, *Die Messe Gregors des Grossen: Vision, Kunst, Realität*, exh. cat. (Cologne: Schnütgen Museum, 1982); B. d'Hainaut-Zveny, "Les messes de saint Grégoire dans les retables des Pays-Bas. Mise en perspective historique d'une image polémique, dogmatique et utilitariste," *Bulletin des Musées royeaux des beaux-arts de Belgique*, 1–4 (1992–1993), pp. 35–61; Patricia de Leeuw, "Unde et Memores, Domine: Memory and the Mass of St. Gregory," eds. Nancy Netzer and Virginia Reinburg, *Memory and the Middle Ages*, exh. cat. (Chestnut Hill: Boston College Museum of Art, 1995), pp. 33–42; J. Sander, "Die Messe des Heiligen Gregor Ablaßversprechen un Meßliturgie," in Jochen Sander, '*Die Entdeckung der Kunst,*' *Niederländische Kunst des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts in Frankfurt*, exh. cat. Frankfurt: Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Stadelische Galerie, 1995 (Mainz: P. von Zabern, 1995), pp. 51–56; C. Göttler, "Is Seeing Believing? The Use of Evidence in Representations of the Miraculous Mass of St. Gregory, *The Germanic Review*, 76/2 (2001), pp. 120–42; Caroline Walker Bynum, "Seeing and Seeing Beyond: The Mass of St. Gregory in the Fifteenth Century," in *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, (eds.) Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 204–40; and Andreas Gormans and Thomas Lentes, (eds.), *Die Bild der Erscheinung. Die Gregorsmesse im Mittelalter* (Berlin: Reimer, 2007). In addition there is a database of images of the St. Gregory Mass at the University of Muenster: http://gregorsmesse.uni-muenster.de/

[4] Westfehling, *Die Messe Gregors des Grossen*, pp. 16–17.

[5] Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993), I, pp. 179–80.

Eucharistic literary stories do not seem directly related to most of the visual versions of the story which feature Christ as the Man of Sorrows standing on the altar rather than as a finger or other body part in the bread or wine.[6]

While distinct from the post-1400 visual representations there is an image which does seem to be related to the development of the late medieval St. Gregory Mass.[7] A Byzantine mosaic icon of the Man of Sorrows from the church of Santa Gerusalemme in Croce in Rome was believed to represent an image commissioned by Pope Gregory to represent his vision, a story promulgated by the Carthusian order.[8] The image was even purportedly inscribed by Gregory himself, "Christ as he appeared to me."[9] Recent investigation of the icon suggests that it represents a type developed in Byzantium in the twelfth century called the *Akra Tapeinosis* (or Christ of Utmost Humiliation), and rather than arriving at Santa Gerusalemme during the early medieval period it was probably brought there some time during the fourteenth century, perhaps by the Italian count, Raimondello Orsini del Balzo who visited the monastery of St. Catherine in the Sinai in 1380 and may have brought the icon from there.[10] In spite of its actual circuitous arrival in Rome this mosaic icon was associated with Gregory and his vision by the late fourteenth century. It seems that the icon was instrumental in replacing the concept of the early literary miracles of body parts with the image of the Man of Sorrows, a standard feature in the later iconography of the Mass of St. Gregory.

After 1400 the image of the Mass of St. Gregory became widespread in medieval art. Such visual manifestations have a variety of precise forms, but they almost always show Gregory and his entourage, usu-

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[6] Bynum, "Seeing and Seeing Beyond," p. 209.

[7] Westfehling, *Die Messe Gregors des Grossen*, p. 16.

[8] Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 337, 341.

[9] An inscription on the eighteenth-century wooden frame of this icon reads, "*Fuit S. Gregorii Magni Pape*." This inscription repeats an earlier tradition of the icon representing Gregory's vision. See Bertelli, "The Image of Pity," p. 41.

[10] See *Byzantium: Faith and Power (1261–1557)*, ed. Helen C. Evans, exh. cat. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2004), no. 131 for a recent study of this object. Bertelli, "The Image of Pity," pp. 40–43 is the most complete study yet published on the condition of the case and the restoration of the mosaic image. See also Hans Belting, *Das Bild und seun Publikum im Mittelalter*, *Form und Funktion früher Bildtafeln der Passion* (Berlin: Mann, 1981), pp. 66–67, 286–87; Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, pp. 337, 341–42.

ally consisting of clerics, in a church before an altar, often with the saint saying mass, although their precise activities may vary. Christ as a Man of Sorrows appears on the altar. He may or may not (as in the Brooklyn example) be seen by the Pope and his attendants. Sometimes Christ is accompanied by angels and sometimes by the *arma Christi*, or instruments that wounded him. Blood from Christ's wounds often drips or spurts into a chalice. Because the St. Gregory Mass shows a bleeding Christ and the celebration of the mass, the image has been used as a support for the idea of transubstantiation, a term ("transubstantiated") first used at the fourth Lateran Council of 1215.[11] Since the real presence of Christ in the bread and wine was one of the tenets of the Christian faith often vigorously criticized by Wycliffites and Lollard reformers, the argument has been made that images such as the Brooklyn St. Gregory alabaster supported the orthodox position on transubstantiation in the face of such attacks.[12] Caroline Bynum has suggested that such an interpretation is too literal and uses art in a manner that is too illustrative.[13] She argues, following Hans Jorissen, James McCue, Brian Stock, David Burr, and Gary Macy that the real presence and term "transubstantiation" was not understood in anything like its current sense until after the Council of Trent in 1551.[14] While it may not be a literal illustration of the doctrine of transubstantiation, the Mass of St. Gregory was one of a group of subjects including the Man of Sorrows and the Pietá, whose popularity radically increased in the fifteenth century and which responded to new devotional needs for a new kind of more intimate connection to Christ also embodied in new kinds of Eucharistic piety.

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[11] Canon 1 of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 says, "Jesus Christ, whose body and blood are truly contained in the sacrament of the altar under the forms of bread and wine; the bread being changed (*transsubstantiatio*) by divine power into the body, and the wine into the blood, so that to realize the mystery of unity we may receive of Him what He has received of us." from H.J. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils: Text, Translation and Commentary* (St. Louis: B. Herder, 1937), pp. 236–96.

[12] For a discussion of the heretical view of transubstantion see Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: the Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 324–30, on the Mass of St. Gregory, pp. 309–10.

[13] Bynum, "Seeing and Seeing Beyond," p. 209 and n. 9, 234.

[14] The nature of the Eucharist was considered at sessions in 1551 in the 13th session of the Council of Trent. See The Council of Trent, The Thirteenth Session, "*The canons and decrees of the sacred and oecumenical Council of Trent*," ed. and trans. J. Waterworth (London: Dolman, 1848), pp. 75–91.

Another reason for the popularity of the image of the Mass of St. Gregory may be that such images often carried an indulgence, or a promise of the partial remission of sins of the viewer. An indulgence is, in theory, part of the process of penance, but by the later Middle Ages this process had grown into a rather complex exchange where certain acts, some of which were financial donations, would, according to the church, result in the reduction of a particular amount of time in purgatory, the region where sinners were purified after death before achieving heaven.[15] The church claimed the authority to do this because it regulated the treasury of merit of Christ and the saints and could shift these benefits to sinners if they were deemed worthy. The cynical have pointed out since at least the Reformation that while the benefits of both the treasury of merits and the reduction of time in purgatory are not readily measurable in the here and now, the indulgence donations often provided concrete and immediate financial benefits to the church.[16] More recently there has been a turn away from

[15] Art that carries indulgences is also a subject with a large and growing bibliography. Major studies on the role of indulgences in England include: Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars. Traditional Religion in England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992); Flora Lewis, "Rewarding Devotion: Indugences and the Promotion of Images," in (ed.) D. Wood, *The Church and the Arts* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), pp. 179–94; Nigel Morgan, "The Scala Coeli Indulgence and the Royal Chapels," in (ed.) Benjamin Thompson, *The Reign of Henry VII: Procceding of the 1993 Harlaxton Symposium* (Stamford: P. Watkins, 1995), pp. 82–103; Diana Webb, *Pigrimage in Medieval England* (London, Hambledon, 2000); Nicholas Vincent, *The Holy Blood: King Henry III and the Westminster Blood Relic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); R.N. Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England: Passports to Paradise?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007). Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England*, pp. 8–22 discusses the origins and doctrinal meaning of indulgences. There is also an on-line bibliography on indulgences and art sponsored by the Courtauld Institute of Art http://www.courtauld.ac.uk/researchforum/aai/biography.shtml

[16] Luther's famous *95 Theses* criticize the concept of indulgences especially in theses 49–82. Thesis 82 says in English, "To wit:—Why does not the pope empty purgatory, for the sake of holy love and of the dire need of the souls that are there, if he redeems an infinite number of souls for the sake of miserable money with which to build a Church? The former reasons would be most just; the latter is most trivial." A discussion of Luther's view of indulgences forms a central part of many of the works in the voluminous bibliography on Luther's theology. For a basic summary see Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine.* Volume 4: *Reformation of Church and Dogma (1300–1700)* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). Other recent treatments of indulgences and Luther include Bernhard Lohse, *Martin Luther's Theology: Its History and Systematic Development*, trans. Roy A. Harrisville (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999); Donald McKim, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Martin Luther* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); David

this interpretation and new scholarship often considers indulgences as part of the larger character of late medieval piety.[17] Many indulgences were paid for in prayers rather than cash and the general emphasis on the quantifiable seems to be applicable to many aspects of life in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and is perhaps associated with the growth of urban capitalism.

In the early fifteenth century the Mass of St. Gregory began to appear on Northern European indulgence charts. These lists include an original indulgence supposedly given by Gregory himself and reconfirmed in a spurious document of Pope Clement VI (1342–1352).[18] It is unclear exactly how this tradition started. The church of Santa Croce also has passion relics which were indulgenced for the Jubilee Year of 1350 and it is possible that after its arrival in the 1380s the icon was included in the indulgence with these other relics located in the same space.[19] By the second quarter of the fifteenth century these indulgences were often incorporated in text form in prints and other works which showed the Mass of St. Gregory. For example a Northern Netherlandish woodcut of the Mass of St. Gregory dating from 1460 which includes the *arma Christi* promises that if the viewer looks on the image and says three Our Fathers and three Hail Marys and repents of his or her sins, that person will receive an indulgence of 14,000 years. The inscription goes on to exhort the viewer, "Now earn it yourselves, in humility."[20] **(fig. 10.2)** English versions of the Mass

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C. Steinmetz, *Luther in Context*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2002); Mark Edwards, *Printing Propaganda and Martin Luther* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), who discusses the role of printing both of Luther's works and the printing of indulgences themselves.

[17] Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England*, pp. 258–59.

[18] Bertelli, "Image of Pity," p. 46.

[19] Peter Parshall and Rainer Schoch, *Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-Century Woodcuts and Their Public*, exh. cat., Washington: National Gallery of Art and Nuremberg: Germanisches Nationalmuseum (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 144, no. 32.

[20] A Northern Netherlandish woodcut of *c.* 1460 from the Germanisches Nationalmuseum H 13, has a printed indulgence on it. The text in translation reads, "Anyone who views the weapons of our Lord [*arma* Christi] which caused him sorrow and with which he was wretchedly tortured by unknowing Jews, and who then kneels, repeats the Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary three times each and repents of his sins, will earn an indulgence of 14,000 years, granted by Pope Gregory and two more popes—this is the truth—will also grant an indulgence, as will forty other bishops. This can be earned by poor and rich alike. Now earn it yourselves, in humility." Parshall and Schoch, *Origins of European Printmaking*, pp. 250–52, no. 75.

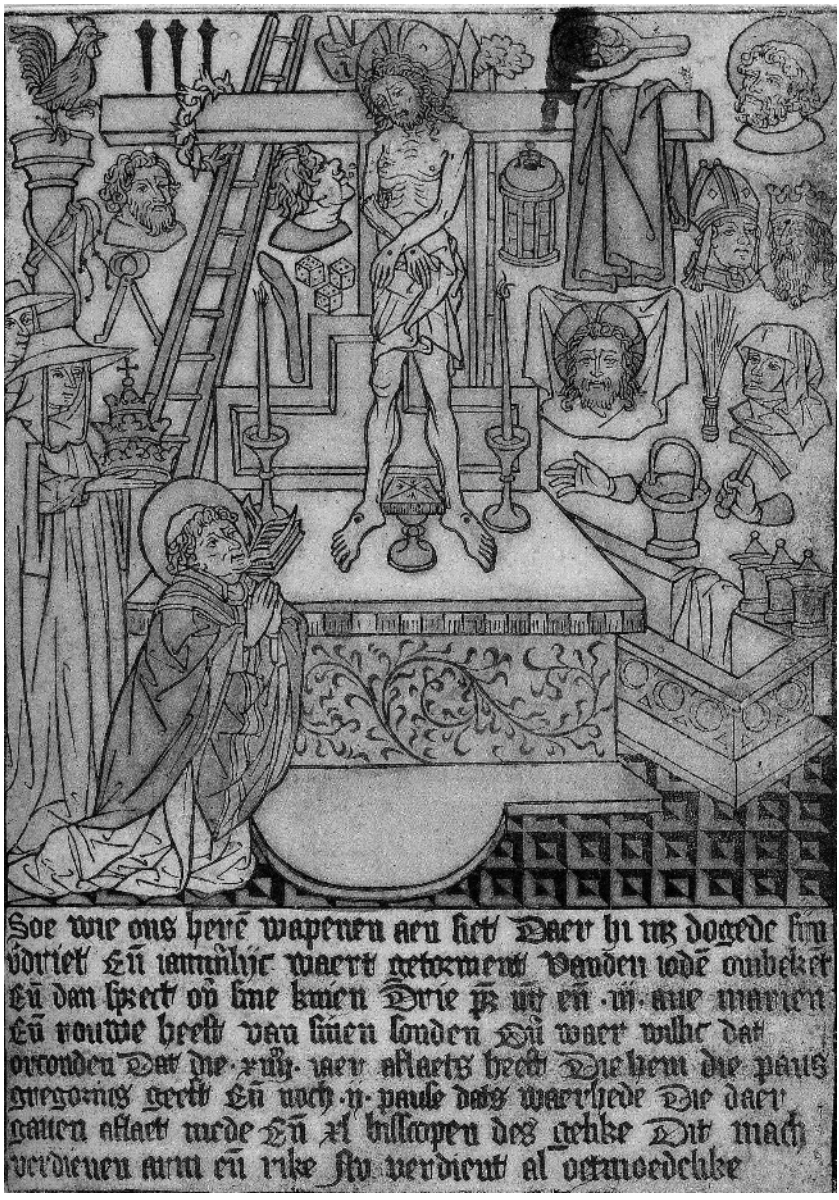

Fig. 10.2 The Mass of St. Gregory, *c.* 1460, colored woodcut, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg. Photo: Permission of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum.

of St. Gregory including prints, Books of Hours, funeral brasses and other depictions also often carried indulgence inscriptions.[21]

Although some St. Gregory Masses originally had such written indulgences, many did not. (Indeed, it is uncertain whether the Brooklyn panel had such an inscription since its frame is missing.) R.N. Swanson has argued, however, that all images of the St. Gregory Mass were perceived to carry an indulgence whether one was actually written on it or not.[22] Clearly such Mass of St. Gregory images were not passive "pictures" but vital devices in the worshippers' devotional life requiring looking and praying to receive the desired indulgence.

As well as representing a particular subject characteristic of fifteenth century devotional life, the Brooklyn Mass of St. Gregory is also representative of a relatively new type of object, equally characteristic of its time period. One of the things that allowed so many more visual representations to exist in the fifteenth century was the quasi-industrial method of production for art objects. Alabasters certainly embody those new types of manufacture. This new method of manufacture suggests new attitudes towards art works. The production of a greater number of visual works created opportunities for more people to have direct contact with them. This familiarity coincides with new and more interactive methods of reception. including praying with them and physically touching them.

The traditional scholarly association of all alabaster sculpture with Nottingham has largely been replaced by a more complex theory of production sites.[23] Many alabasters were indeed made in the midlands near the quarries at Tutbury in Staffordshire, and at Chellaston Hill near Nottingham in Derbyshire, and at quarry sites in North

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[21] Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England*, pp. 258–59; Kathleen Kamerick, *Popular Piety and Art in the Late Middle Ages: Image Worship and Idolatry in England, 1350–1500* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 171–72.

[22] Swanson, *Indulgences in Late Medieval England*, pp. 258–59.

[23] The traditional scholarly association of alabaster carving with Nottingham seems to originate with W.H. St. John Hope's article, "On the Early Working of Alabaster in England," *Archeological Journal LXI* (1904), pp. 221–40. It has been suggested that Hope was unduly influenced by the recent publication (1882–9) of medieval documents from Nottingham suggesting a disproportionate role for that city. Nigel Ramsay, "Alabaster" in *English Medieval Industires: Craftsmen, Techniques, Products,* eds. John Blair and Nigel Ramsay (London and Rio Grande: The Hambledon Press, 1991), p. 35. See also Paul Williamson, ed., *Object of Devotion: Medieval English Alabaster Sculpture from the Victoria and Albert Museum* (Alexandria VA and London: Art Services International in Association with the Victoria and Albert Museum, 2010), pp. 30–31.

Yorkshire, less precisely identified. The actual carving may have also occurred at additional sites including Burton-on-Trent, Coventry and perhaps London and Lincoln as well. In spite of stone analysis, the physical nature of alabaster is too uniform to permit association of particular sculptures with particular locations.[24] There are numerous textual records of the lives of alabastermen especially in law suits and contracts and alabasters themselves are often mentioned in wills and shipping documents.[25] The range of products of the alabastermen was considerable. On the high end there were one-of-a-kind tombs which may rightly be considered with such traditional art historical notions as artist, patron and distinctive individual style. On the lower end were single figures and narrative panels, such as the Brooklyn example, which were produced in great numbers according to standard compositions, in generic style and for a market rather than an individualized patron. While prices for alabasters varied, entire altarpieces were often available for £1 or a little more making them within the reach of many people and institutions and undoubtedly contributing to their popularity.[26] Over 2000 alabaster panels survive today, largely in continental Europe as most of those in England were suppressed or destroyed during the Reformation, indicating that the original number of such panels was much higher.[27] While not physical multiples like prints, alabaster panels were produced in standard formats employing a non-individualized carving style that suggests mass production. As such the panels were a part of the so-called image explosion that

[24] Alabaster is a type of fine-grained gypsum but its relative purity makes it impossible to differentiate quarries. R.J. Firman, "A Geological Approach to the History of English Alabaster," *Mercian Geologist*, ix 3 (March 1984), pp. 161–78 and Ramsay, "Alabaster," pp. 30–31.

[25] Francis W. Cheetham, *English Medieval Alabasters: With a Catalogue of the Collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum* (Oxford: Phaidon Christies, 1984), pp. 13–17.

[26] Specialty alabaster carving of tombs and reredos was the most expensive type sometimes commanding £ 200–500 while heads of John the Baptist were the cheapest, sometimes costing as little as 8 to 12 pence. Cheetham, *Alabasters: Victoria and Albert Museum*, p. 31. Richard Marks has argued that early alabaster carvings were unique and of high quality. More repetitious and cheaper methods of production became common in the fifteenth century. *Image and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (Phoenix Hill: Sutton, 2004), p. 229.

[27] The act of parliament in Jan. 1550 on Books and Images made it a crime to have religious images, including alabasters, but the industry had been declining since the iconoclasm of the 1530s. Cheetham, *Alabasters: Victoria and Albert Museum*, pp. 51–54; Ramsay, "Alabaster," pp. 39–40.

occurred at the end of the Middle Ages. While some alabaster panels were contained in individual housings the vast majority were arranged in altarpieces of five to seven narrative panels, mostly of two types, the Passion of Christ and the Joys of the Virgin. More rarely alabaster narrative panels were included in tombs.

Ease and practicality of shipping and set-up were major factors in production of narrative panels destined for altarpieces. For example many panels including the Brooklyn Mass of St. Gregory are hollowed on the bottom edge to make them easier to lift off of a flat surface. Although soft and easy to work when first removed from the quarries, alabaster becomes relatively brittle when exposed to air and the panels may easily be broken. (In fact the Brooklyn alabaster is in approximately thirteen pieces.) Therefore the panels were shipped separately and then wired into less fragile wooden frames, presumably on site. Many alabasters, including the Brooklyn panel have numbers scratched on the backs which indicate how they were to be placed in the finished work. In this case the primitive "III" on the back of the Brooklyn panel would indicate that it was the third panel in a sequence. All these technical elements suggest the practical, quasi-industrial approach that the alabastermen had to their work.

This mass production method was complemented by the way alabasters were sold. Factors (traveling salesmen) were employed by the manufacturers to sell alabasters in England.[28] Alabasters were also part of a vast export trade. English alabasters are found today in churches in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Croatia, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Poland, with a particularly large number in Scandinavia, France and Spain. Alabasters have been found on fifteenth and sixteenth-century customs accounts for ships leaving London and Bristol in mixed lots of goods exported by merchants.[29] The trade routes were multiple and perhaps intertwined with those of the Hanseatic league, which shipped many English goods to Northern Europe.[30] It has been speculated that as

[28] Laurence Stone, *Sculpture in Britain: The Middle Ages* (Baltimore, Penguin Books, 1955), p. 216.

[29] Ramsay, "Alabaster," p. 38.

[30] For example, Hanseatic league merchants had trading contracts at Kings Lynn from 1271. Other ports such as Boston, Hull and London also had trading contracts with the Hanse. The son of Margery Kempe married a Prussian woman and both travelled to Lynn in 1431, leaving their child in Danzig. Unfortunately, Margery's son died in Lynn and she escorted her daughter-in-law back to Danzig. The league's

trade goods English alabaster altarpieces competed with Netherlandish altarpieces and figures in wood and alabaster from such centers as Malines and Antwerp which were also widely distributed during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[31]

Because of their method of manufacture and marketing alabaster narrative panels often represent standard compositional types.[32] An understanding of these types is important in assessing how they work as interactive objects. Although some alabaster panels, such as the Annunciation, the Coronation of the Virgin, the Crucifixion, the Resurrection and the Trinity are represented by more than eighty extant examples each, the Mass of St. Gregory is rarer with fewer than ten examples still extant.[33] In spite of this relatively small number, there is a standard compositional type for the Mass of St. Gregory where a smaller-scale Christ is surrounded by two angels on the altar in the upper right, St. Gregory stands in the center, with his entourage on the bottom and left side of the panel. Besides the Brooklyn panel, this composition with minor variations may be seen in the examples from Durham Cathedral, England,[34] **(fig. 10.3)** the Röhsska Museum, Gothenburg, Sweden[35] **(fig. 10.4)** and in a panel that used to be in the church of Notre Dame, Montréal (Yonne), France.[36] **(fig. 10.5)**

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principal trade consisted of grain, timber, furs, tar, honey, and flax traded from Russia and Poland to Flanders and England, which in turn sent cloth and other manufactured goods eastward to the Slavs. Swedish copper and iron ore were traded westward, and herring caught off the southern tip of Sweden was traded throughout Germany southward to the Alps.

[31] On Netherlandish wooden altarpieces and their production for an open art market rather than for specific patrons see the work of Lynn Jacobs including, *Early Netherlandish Carved Altarpieces, 1380–1550. Medieval Tastes and Mass Marketing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). On Netherlandish alabasters see: G. Derveaux-Van Ussel, *Expositions de Sculptures anglaises et malinoises d'Albâtre* exh. cat. (Brussels: Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, 1967) and Michael K. Wustrack, *Die Alabaster-Manufaktur des 16. und frühen 17. Jarhunderts* (Frankfurt am Maine and Berne: Peter Lang, 1982).

[32] Francis Cheetham and others classified alabaster compositions into types; for example Cheetham has six types of Annunciation to the Virgin, four types of the Trinity and six types of Heads of St. John the Baptist. Cheetham, *Alabasters: Victoria and Albert Museum*, pp. 162–63, 296, 317–18.

[33] Cheetham mentions seven examples known to him, but at least two additional versions are known to me and there may be several others. Cheetham, *Alabaster Images*, p. 42.

[34] *The Connoisseur*, (March 1955), advertisement by S.W. Wolsey; Cheetham, *Alabaster Imagers*, p. 42, no. 4.

[35] W.L. Hildburgh, "Further Notes on English Alabaster Carvings," *Antiquaries Journal* 10 (1930), pp. 34–45; Cheetham, *Alabaster Images*, p. 42, no. 1.

[36] The Mass of St. Gregory panel and three other panels from the Joys of the Virgin altarpiece in the church of Notre Dame in Montréal (Yonne) were stolen in 1971. They

Fig. 10.3 The Mass of St. Gregory, fifteenth century, alabaster, Durham Cathedral, Durham (Durham), England. Photo: the Library, Durham Cathedral, by permission.

Fig. 10.4 The Mass of St. Gregory, fifteenth century, alabaster, Röhsska Museum, Gothenburg, Sweden. Photo: Röhsska Museum, by permission.

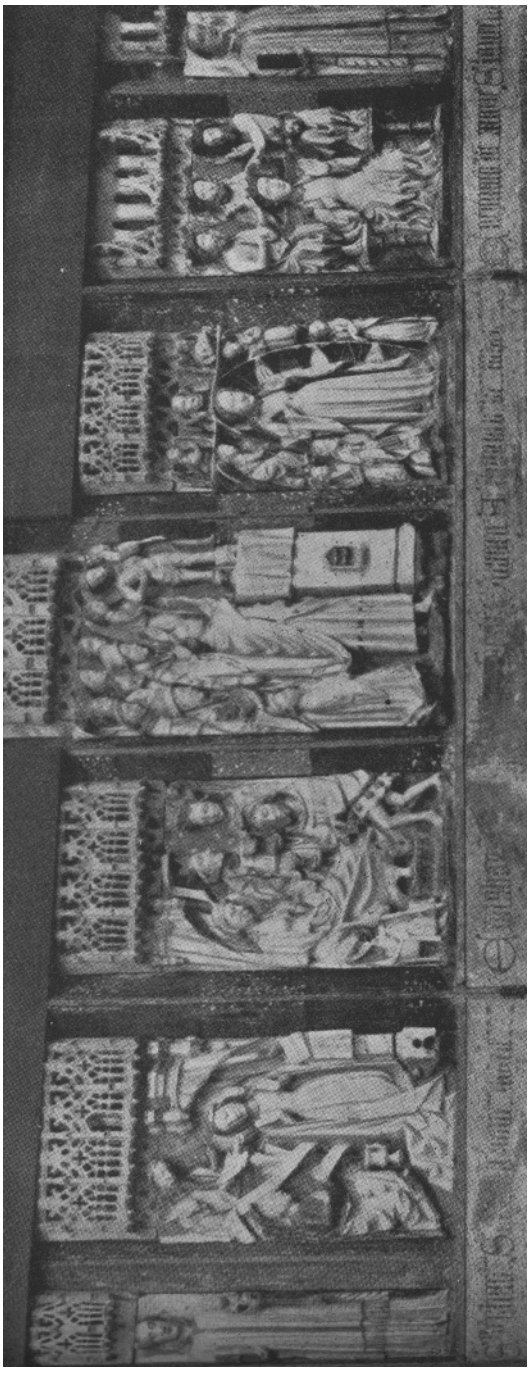

Fig. 10.5 The Mass of St. Gregory, fifteenth century, alabaster, original panel photographed in 1908, Church of Notre Dame, Montréal (Yonne) France. Photo: after E.S. Prior and A. Gardner, *An Account of Medieval Figure Sculpture in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), p. 465.

There is some variety in this compositional type though. For example, the Durham Cathedral panel has the same basic elements as the Brooklyn composition, but there are many differences in the details. **(fig. 10.3)** Both panels share a similar overall composition with Christ on the altar in the upper right, St. Gregory holding the host at the center and the clerical party on the bottom and left side of the panel. St. Gregory in the Durham panel has a similar attendant holding his cloak and there are two cardinals, rather than the three seen in Brooklyn. The Durham Cathedral example also shows two additional figures, one kneeling before the altar, apparently vested in monastic garb, and a second bare-headed figure between the two cardinals. The former small figure may represent a donor, as his appearance is similar to donor figures which sometimes appear in other alabaster compositions.[37] There are also differences in the depiction of Christ within a generally similar conception. At Durham he is seen half-length coming out of a tomb placed on the altar. Again there are two angels opening his robe so that he may gesture towards his wound. This depiction of Christ is similar to the type of Man of Sorrows iconography in which Christ often emerges half-length from a tomb. Many of the faces are damaged in the Durham panel making their gazes more difficult to interpret, however the two realms so clearly identified in the Brooklyn panel are less apparent in the Durham St. Gregory Mass. While Gregory and the lowest cardinal in the Durham panel are clearly looking at the Host rather than at Christ, the attendant and other figure in the lower portion of the composition are so damaged that it is impossible to tell where they would have originally gazed.

The panels of the Mass of St. Gregory at the Röhsska Museum **(fig. 10.4)** and from Montréal **(fig. 10.5)** both feature the standing Christ of Brooklyn rather than the Christ emerging from the tomb of Durham Cathedral but these two examples each have two cardinals, rather

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are currently replaced by photographs of the panels taken before their theft. For the altarpiece's original state see P. Biver, "Some Examples of English Alabaster Tables in France," *Archaeological Journal*, 67 (1910), p. 67 pl. I, IV.

[37] An example of a pair of small kneeling donor figures may be seen in an alabaster trinity in the Toledo Museum of Art, Dorothy Gillerman, ed., *Gothic Sculpture in America* II. *The Museums of the Midwest* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), pp. 366–67, no. 266. The usual position of the hands for donor figures is clasped in prayer, as the outsized hands of the Toledo donors emphasize. While the hands of the Durham figure are missing, the position of the arms makes it unlikely that they were originally clasped in prayer.

than three of the Brooklyn panel and a variety of additional figures.[38] Perhaps because these two examples of the Mass of St. Gregory show the standing Christ who looks out at the viewer, the members of the papal entourage consistently look towards the host rather than to the Christ in a composition in which the glances closely parallel those seen in the Brooklyn panel.

While the composition represented by the Brooklyn panel is most common, there are alabasters that show more iconographic distinction than the group described above. An alabaster panel at the Church of Saint Mary and Saint Michael, Stoke Charity (Hampshire) near Winchester shows a composition with only five figures, Pope Gregory and one attendant and Christ and two angels, depicted as winged heads.[39] **(fig. 10.6)** In the Stoke Charity panel the two realms are characterized by different scales, but Christ is carved in a much larger scale while Gregory and the attendant are more diminutive scale, the reverse of the more common practice. This looming Christ dominates the composition and St. Gregory and his attendant occupy a lateral zone, visually reducing the relative importance of the papal group to a frieze below the main subject. Even in this different type of composition, Christ stares out at the viewer. A narrative panel of the Mass of St. Gregory also appears in a double tomb located in chantry chapel in the church of St. John in Paignton (Devon) known as the Kirkham monument, dating *c.* 1500. **(fig. 10.7)** This relief includes a papal entourage similar to other alabasters,but it spreads to the right of the panel rather than the left side more common in other examples. The angels are uniquely located in a lateral band across the top of the panel. The Christ originally stood out in very high relief and has subsequently broken off with only his legs remaining. This is the only English panel known to me which features the *arma Christi*, common in Continental depictions. This rare iconography, as well as the panel's distinctive style, separates this example from other work in alabaster, with some scholars suggesting London and the new work at the Henry VII chapel as a stylistic source and others suggesting Franco

[38] The example from Sideville, Normandy, published in A. Rostand, "Les Albâtres anglais du XV^{e} siècle en Basse Normandie," *Bulletin Monumental*, 87 (1928), pp. 257–309 has been missing since a theft of 1993.

[39] Mary D. Anderson, *The Imagery of British Churches* (London: J. Murray 1971), pp. 57–58, fig. 20; John Edwards, "A Medieval Wall-Painting at St. Mary and St. Michael's Church, Stoke Charity," *Hampshire Field Club and Archaeologiacal Society* 41 (1985), pp. 139–48. This is also the only English alabaster in the Gregorsmesse database at the University of Münster, (http://gregorsmesse.uni-muenster.de/).

Fig. 10.6 The Mass of St. Gregory, fifteenth century, alabaster, Church of St. Mary and St. Michael, Stoke Charity (Hampshire), England. Photo: by permission of the Church Wardens.

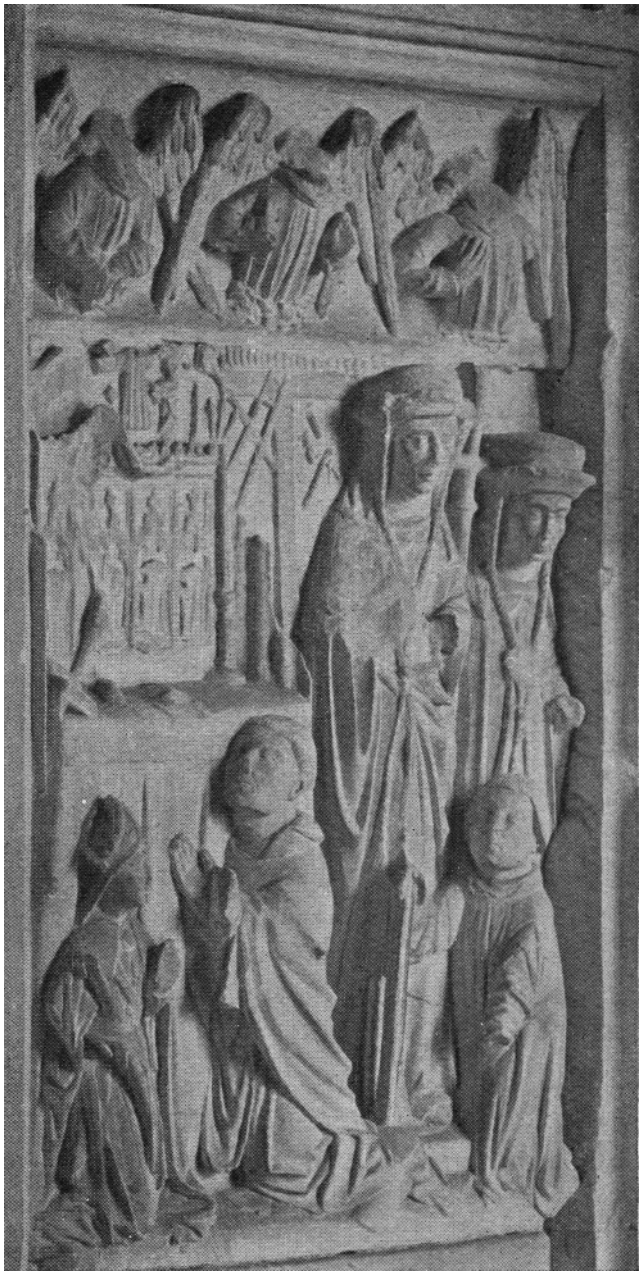

Fig. 10.7 The Mass of St. Gregory, *c.* 1500, stone, "Kirkham Monument," Church of St. John, Paignton (Devon), England. Photo: after E.S. Prior and A. Gardner, *An Account of Medieval Figure Sculpture in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), p. 457.

Flemish retables or German sources for the distinctive iconography of the composition.[40]

An analysis of the compositional types of the alabaster Mass of St. Gregory has indicated that one of the most striking aspects of the Brooklyn relief and other English alabasters of the subject is the absence of overt emphasis on Christ's suffering and blood. It is interesting to compare these English alabaster examples to St. Gregory Masses from Germany and Northern Europe where the suffering of Christ is emphasized. Often he is depicted surrounded by the *arma Christi*, the instruments of torture as in the Netherlandish print. **(fig. 10.2)** These are only present in the distinctive Kirkham chantry panel which has a continental iconographic source. Christ's blood also forms a significant part of the image in continental examples, often spurting into a chalice. In a painting of the Mass of St. Gregory from the Altar of St. Anne and the Holy Kinship in St. Maria zur Wiese in Soest, not only are St. Gregory and the churchmen depicted at the mass inside the church, but the dead rising from their graves in the churchyard are seen through lateral windows. In this particularly dramatic example, the blood from Christ's chest wound spurts into the chalice and then sprays out of the chalice onto the rising dead, **(fig. 10.8)** thus making explicit the connection between Christ's suffering, the Eucharist and the resurrection of the dead.[41]

While the Brooklyn alabaster shows a wounded Man of Sorrows with his Crucifixion *torse* and loincloth pointing to his exposed torso, there are no tormentors or instruments of torture. A careful eye can follow the blood dripping down the Brooklyn Christ's chest into the chalice on the altar, but it is a very subtle presentation. It can be argued that the trail of blood in a three-dimensional sculpture cannot have the vibrant spurting quality of painted representations, the visual importance of the blood is also decreased in the Brooklyn panel by the

[40] Bibliography on the so-called Kirkham Monument includes Geoffrey McNeil Ruthforth, *The Kirkham Monument in Paignton Church, Devon. A study in mediæval iconography, and in particular of the Mass of St. Gregory* (Exeter: William Pollard, 1927); Edward S. Prior and Arthur Gardner, *An Account of Medieval Figure Sculpture in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), pp. 456–59; Stone, *Sculpture in Britain*, pp. 223–24; Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, p. 151.

[41] See Caroline Bynum, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), p. 11 for an analysis of the composition and meaning of this painting.

Fig. 10.8 The Mass of St. Gregory, Altar of St. Anne and the Holy Kinship in St. Maria zur Wiese, Soest, Germany, 1473, painting. Photo: Foto Marburg/ Art Resource NY.

placement of the chalice which is placed behind Gregory's upraised arms which hold the prominent host.

These factors de-emphasize the suffering and the blood of Christ. This overall restraint characterizes other alabaster panels of the Brooklyn type (Durham, **fig. 10.4**; Röhsska, **fig. 10.5**; and Montréal, **fig. 10.6**) and even the example at Stoke Charity **(fig. 10.7)** which represents a different iconographic type. While there are some differences between these compositions as we have seen, overall the *arma Christi* and in general the injured aspects of Christ's body are de-emphasized in the English alabaster examples. Instead of an emphasis on active suffering and the instruments of the passion, looking at Christ and his looking out towards the viewer, i.e., direct visual interaction, especially in the Brooklyn panel, seems to be what creates the empathetic connection between Christ and the viewer.

While we do not know the original context of the Brooklyn panel, an examination of the two sculpted Masses of St. Gregory where the context is known are illuminating in understanding its original function. One example is in a tomb and the other is in an altarpiece of the Joys of the Virgin. The Mass of St. Gregory from the church of St. John in Paignton, with the distinctive continental iconography, was originally part of a double tomb. The composition consists of two sets of effigies within a detailed screen created with pinnacles and many sculpted figures. At the feet of one of the knights is a relief of the Mass of St. Gregory. At the feet of the other knight is a Holy Kinship composition, which depicts the Virgin's family. In this context the sculpted Mass of St. Gregory is probably analogous to the tomb brasses with this subject which carry written inscriptions urging the viewer to pray for the deceased. Although narrative panels in tombs are rare and this Paignton St. Gregory Mass is not typical of alabaster panels, and may represent a unique placement for this imagery, it, nevertheless, does suggest a potential original setting for the Brooklyn panel.[42] It is noteworthy that in this example, as well as in the alabaster altarpieces, the Mass of St. Gregory accompanies imagery of the Virgin.

The more likely original placement for the Brooklyn Mass of St. Gregory is as the central panel of a Joys of the Virgin altarpiece. An example of such a placement for a Mass of St. Gregory could be found until recently in Montréal (Yonne) France. **(fig. 10.9)** Here the altarpiece consisted of five narrative panels with two standing saints,

[42] Prior and Gardner, *Medieval Figure Sculpture*, pp. 456–59.

Fig. 10.9 The Joys of the Virgin altarpiece with a Mass of St. Gregory as its center panel, fifteenth century, alabaster, Church of Notre Dame, Montréal (Yonne), France. Current state, summer 2009. Photo: author.

Stephen and Lawrence, on either end. The narrative panels are an Annunciation, an Adoration of the Magi, The Mass of St. Gregory, an Assumption and a Coronation of the Virgin by the Trinity. Altarpieces are the most common original location for alabaster narrative panels of all subjects and technical aspects make it likely that the Brooklyn Mass of St. Gregory originally had such placement. The III scratched in the back of the Brooklyn panel makes it likely that this relief was centrally positioned in a five-panel altarpiece, the most common type. It was also usual for the center panel in an altarpiece to be taller than the surrounding panels. The Brooklyn panel's 21 1/2 inch height (54.6 cms) corresponds to height characteristic of central panels. (The lateral narrative panels were usually shorter in height, between 15 1/2 and 17 1/4 inches, 40 to 44 cms.)

The Joys of the Virgin is an altarpiece that celebrates the incarnation of Christ and it is interesting to consider how the Mass of St. Gregory fits within this context. The other narrative panels in such an altarpiece emphasize Christ's becoming flesh most often through the Annunciation to his mother, and the Adoration of the Magi and then the triumph of the Virgin herself in reliefs which show her Assumption and Coronation in heaven. The central panel often departs from this sequence and makes a different kind of statement. Other central panels in such altarpieces in addition to the Mass of St. Gregory include the comparatively rare Tree of Jesse, and two much more common subjects, the Resurrection and the Trinity.[43] The Tree of Jesse refers to the lineage of the Virgin, becoming a standard accompaniment to her life starting in late twelfth-century cathedral sculpture such as that found in the west portal of Notre Dame of Senlis (Oise) France. The often-employed Resurrection, Christ's triumph over death, seems logical in the generally joyful character of these altarpieces. The equally common Trinity seems to represent a similar conceptual approach to the Joys of the Virgin as does the Mass of St. Gregory. Both these compositions place the Eucharistic sacrifice of Christ in the context of the Virgin's life. In Trinity panels such as those in the Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester, God the Father holds the Crucified Christ between his knees. The dove of the Holy Spirit was usually pegged into the chest of God the Father. **(fig. 10.10)** The Eucharistic importance

[43] Other rare central panels include an enlarged Assumption and Coronation, at the Church of San Benedetto in Pisa, Italy and an enlarged Crucifixion at the Church of St. Riquier, (Seine Maritime) France.

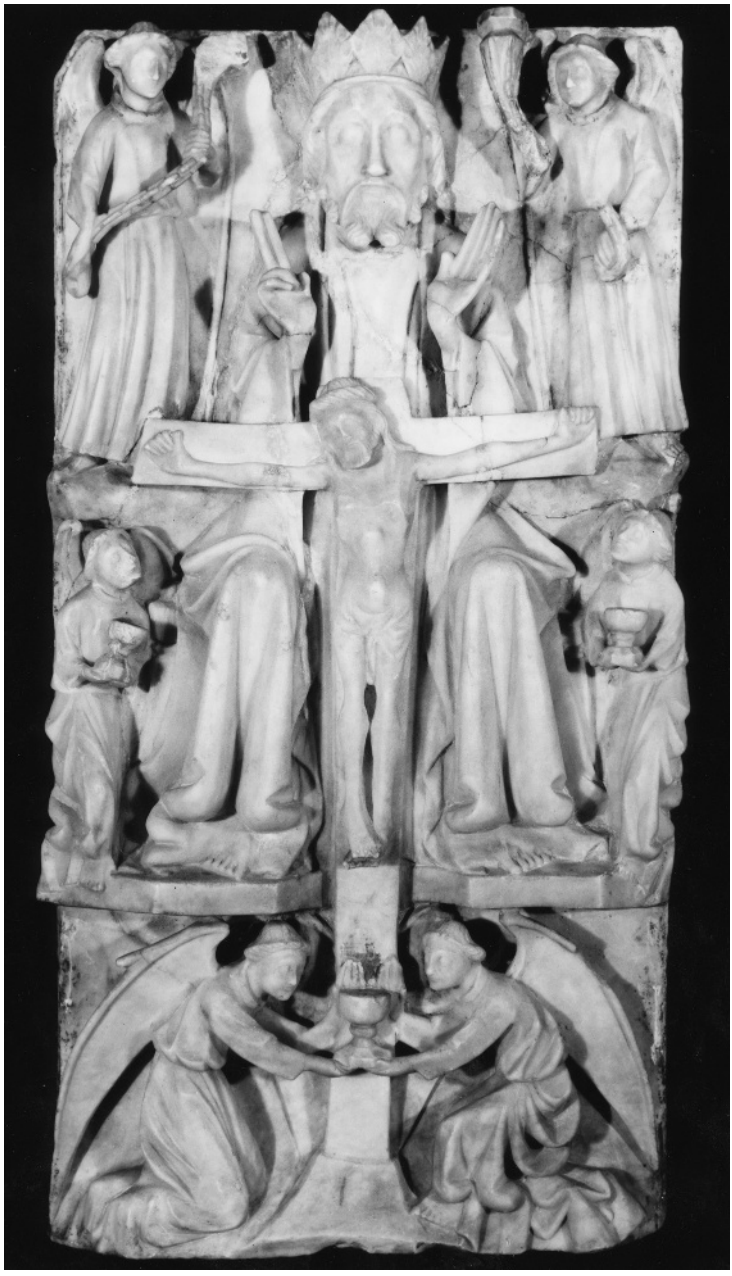

Fig. 10.10 The Trinity, fifteenth century, alabaster, Memorial Art Gallery, University of Rochester, Rochester NY. Photo: Memorial Art Gallery, by permission.

of the image is emphasized by angels holding chalices to catch the blood as it falls from Christ's feet and hands. Both the Trinity and the Mass of St. Gregory represent a moment related to Eucharistic devotion, out of the chronology of the Virgin's life celebrated in the other panels. In an analysis of visual sources of Margery Kempe's visions, Sarah Stanbury pointed to both the Trinity and the Gregorian Man of Sorrows as images important in fifteenth century England and central to Kempe's emotive connection to Christ.[44] Stanbury suggests that both images were targeted by the Lollards in their anti-image campaigns and therefore were particularly important to Kempe in reinforcing her own orthodoxy. As such these images represent a new type of devotional image incorporated into more traditional Marian iconography.

The relationship of the Virgin Mary to the Eucharist was a significant part of late medieval Corpus Christi devotions and there is a large body of literature that links the Virgin and the sacrifice on the altar. An example of this type of linking may be seen in Nicholas Love's very popular *Mirrour of the blessed lyf of Jesu Crist* probably published in 1410, a translation of the *Meditationes vitae Christi*, a Franciscan writing traditionally associated with St. Bonaventure, which says, "His mete that he ȝeueth to us in the sacremente of the awtere; for thereynne is he verreily And in that self body that was so merueylosly conceyude by the holy goost about kynde and also merueylosly born of his blessed moder Marye with oute sorwe or weme of synne."[45] The incarnational emphasis of such thinking may explain, in part, why the English alabasters of the Mass of St. Gregory usually made for the context of Marian altarpieces, do not accentuate the suffering of Christ.

The Joys of the Virgin altarpieces were created in late medieval England where ideas about images were experiencing particular complexity and stress. While on the one hand images were a vital part of the worship life of most Christians, something which has been reemphasized in the work of scholars such as Eamon Duffy, Richard Marks, Paul Binski, and Pamela Sheingorn, images were also an element violently attacked by both the Wycliffites of the late fourteenth

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[44] Sarah Stanbury, *The Visual Object of Desire in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 203–15.

[45] A critical edition of this text is, *Nicholas Love's Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ: A Critical Edition Based on Cambridge University Library Additional MSS 5478 and 6696*, ed. Michael G. Sargeant (New York: Garland, 1992), p. 302.

century and the Lollards of the fourteenth and fifteenth century.[46] The Lollards particularly opposed the concept of transubstantiation and images which they perceived as supporting such concepts like the Trinity, thus the Mass of St. Gregory was particularly objectionable to them. Alabaster images like the Brooklyn St. Gregory Mass were created in the context of English dynamics about the function of images in the particular culture of England and are therefore perhaps directly addressed to pushing and pulling of a viewer with an awareness of that specific context.

In spite of their English manufacture, however, these altarpieces were sold in sets throughout both England and continental Europe. Most extant altarpieces and panels come from the continent rather than England since most English alabasters were destroyed at the Reformation.[47] If the Brooklyn panel was originally part of an altarpiece from the continent, which seems most likely, while conceived with particularly English sensibilities, the work must have been perceived as being able to create meaning for a large and rather amorphous group of Christian believers.[48] Therefore meaning had to be relatively

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[46] Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*; Marks, *Image and Devotion*; Paul Binski, "The English Parish Church and Its Art in the Later Middle Ages: A Review of the Problem," *Studies in Iconography* 20 (1999), pp. 1–25; Pamela Sheingorn, *The Easter Sepulchre in England* (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 1987).

[47] Alabasters found in England were either walled up to hide them as were the famous alabasters of Long Melford Church or the St. Gregory panel from Stoke Charity which was, according to the church wardens, found walled up near the pulpit in 1849 during a replastering of the church. Or more frequently they were preserved on the continent and then purchased to be placed in an English parish church or museum during the nineteenth century revival of the English parish church. For example the famous intact Joys of the Virgin altarpiece, called the Swansea altarpiece, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum was purchased by Lord Swansea in Munich in the 1830s rather than having a continuous history in England: Richard Marks and Paul Williamson eds., *Gothic Art for England 1400–1547.* exh. cat. (London: V & A Publications and Harry N. Abrams, 2003), pp. 390–91 no. 275. Such replacement of alabasters in English churches has more to do with English medievalizing and the Oxford Movement and Ecclesiological Societies in the Anglican Church than they have to do with the original uses of such alabasters.

[48] According to museum files and the article by Margaret Scheinin, "A 15th Century English Alabaster," *The Brooklyn Museum Bulletin* X/4 (Summer, 1949), p. 15, in 1929 the panel was sold at auction from the collection of a Mrs. Cora Timken Burnett then it passed through the hands of a dealer and was purchased from Mr. Milton Horn by the Brooklyn Museum. There is no record of where the panel was before it was in the collection of Mrs. Burnett. For another kind of English object which was made for export as well as insular use see my article, "Saints in Split Stitch: Representations of Saints in *Opus Anglicanum* Vestments," in *Medieval Clothing and Textiles* 3, (eds.) Robin Netherton and Gale R. Owen-Crocker (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2007),

transparent across broad swathes of Western European Christendom. The knowledge that the image of the Mass of St. Gregory was indulgenced was widespread throughout Europe, partly because of pilgrimage to Rome with the indulgenced image in Santa Croce in Gerusalemme. Certainly if the Brooklyn Mass of St. Gregory was originally part of an altarpiece located in Germany or the Netherlands, there was a broad visual culture of St. Gregory images in which an English alabaster of the subject would have participated.

As parts of Marian altarpieces placed both on the main altar and in subsidiary chapels Mass of St. Gregory alabasters would have been a backdrop for the Mass, a common experience throughout Europe. In a chapel in the absence of a choir screen such an altarpiece would have been visible during the celebration and also for private devotion when the chapel was not being actively used. During the celebration the viewer would have seen the celebrant mimic the gestures and actions of Pope Gregory represented in the panel. However visible to the devotee was an image of Christ behind the sacrifice not visible to the saintly pope in the picture; it was visible to the human celebrant. Mass handbooks which interpreted the Mass for the viewer spoke about what should be conceived during the elevation and in the altarpiece of St. Gregory the viewer is getting a multi-layered vision of the real event, the artistic re-enactment of the event, and the meaning of the event, visible to the 'real' viewers but not to the viewers in the artistic re-enactment. In an empty chapel the visualization would have been a reminder of an event rather than a replication of one.

The push me pull you aspect of this image must have been not only carried in the knowledge of the potential indulgence but also in the construction of the image itself. I would argue that the Christ in the Brooklyn panel looking out at the viewer while the ecclesiastics go on about their business more or less unaware of him is something that pulls at the viewer by its compositional nature. The viewer sees Christ and is connected to the truth behind the everyday particularities of actions in the church, whether in Iceland or in Spain.

Compositions with this universalizing direct visual communication to the viewer are seen in a variety of alabaster panels not just the Mass

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pp. 41–54. While *Opus Anglicanum* textiles are very high end products and not multiply produced like the alabaster panels, here too the imagery must have been created to resonate with a broad European population of viewers.

of St. Gregory. This trend is especially prominent in the second half of the fifteenth century. For example in early alabaster coronations from the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries the Virgin sits on a throne next to Christ who crowns her. The two of them face each other and Christ extends his arm to place the crown on her head.[49] **(fig. 10.11)** This depiction is rather similar to that often found in cathedral portals. In such an image the figures interact primarily with each other and the viewer is an external witness. By the second half of the fifteenth century the Virgin is usually crowned by the Trinity, represented by three men as in the Joys of the Virgin altarpiece in Montréal. **(fig. 10.12)** Here the composition has become hierarchical and open. The Virgin, large and dominant in the lower part of the image, holds her hands up with the palms outstretched and looks directly at the viewer. The Trinity occupies a position in the upper part of the image. Another interesting feature in some of the Coronations is that the virgin wears the triple tiara, a crown with papal associations.[50] Although we cannot know what original scenes accompanied the Brooklyn St. Gregory it is tantalizing to speculate that the original Coronation might have featured a Virgin wearing the triple tiara and identifying her with Pope Gregory whose own triple tiara appears so prominently in the Mass of St. Gregory. Here as in the St. Gregory Mass, the viewer is directly called into interaction with the image.

Seeing Christ could involve envisioning episodes in his life, having visions of him or experiencing him in communion through seeing rather than eating the communion host. As early as the thirteenth century Alexander of Hales spoke of *maducatio per visum* or eating through seeing, as an important way of experiencing the host at Mass.[51] The conception of how seeing worked was changing in the later Middle

[49] Such an example of a Coronation may be seen in an alabaster example from the Museum of Art Rhode Island School of Design, 23.089, Dorothy Gillerman, ed., *Gothic Sculpture in America I. The New England Museums* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1989), pp. 363–64, no. 262.

[50] The virgin wearing a triple tiara may be seen in alabaster Coronation panels at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1962–67–7 (USA); Victoria and Albert Museum A 35–1946 (London, England); Victoria and Albert Museum, A168–1946 (London, England); Victoria and Albert Museum A60–1925 (London, England); Victoria and Albert Museum A157–1946 (London, England); Victoria and Albert Museum A56–1946 (London, England); Victoria and Albert Museum A173–1946 (London, England); Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest (Hungary); Musée des Beaux Arts, Ghent (Belgium); Museu Nacional, Oporto (Portugal); Museu Municipal, Gouveia (Portugal).

[51] Alexander of Hales, *Sentences*, cited in Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, p. 64.

Fig. 10.11 The Coronation of the Virgin, early fifteenth century, Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design. Photo: Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, by permission.

Fig. 10.12 *The Coronation of the Virgin, Joys of the Virgin* altarpiece, fifteenth century, alabaster, Church of Notre Dame, Montréal (Yonne), France. Photo: author.

Ages. From the time of Plato seeing was conceived of as extramission, where the object sent out rays to the visual fire in the eye of the viewer.[52] However, the new theory of intromission, where the eye is a passive recipient of something from the object, was gaining popularity. Katherine Tachau suggested that this was not a clear cut move from one approach to the other and that sometimes elements of both approaches were combined in the thinking of one person such as the case of Robert Grosseteste.[53] Michael Camille emphasized differences between these two predominant approaches and suggests that for someone like St. Augustine who believed in extramission the senses were dangerous doorways which could admit evil and needed to be closely monitored, but for an Aristotelian like St. Thomas Aquinas, the senses have become critical "creative conduits" for understanding the world by using the body. Camille continues suggesting the artistic implications for the new theory, "But the intromission model took the emphasis away from vision and onto the power of images themselves, whose eyes, as in cult statues and devotional images, could stare back."[54]

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[52] Margaret Miles articulates an example of extramission noting that "something similar occurred when they gazed at a painting in which the Virgin's nursing breast was shown: in addition to receiving spiritual nourishment by identification with the infant Christ, they touched the breast and assimilated its nourishment by the act of looking," *A Complex Delight: The Secularization of the Breast 1350–1750* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), p. 9.

[53] Katherine Tachau," Seeing as Action and Passion in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," in *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, (eds.) Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 338–43.

[54] Michael Camille, "Before the Gaze: The Internal Senses and Late Medieval Practices of Seeing," in *Visuality before and Beyond the Renaissance: Seeing as Others Saw*, (ed.) Robert Nelson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), p. 207. Camille says, "This new emphasis upon the object in intromission did not imply that there was a move away from subjectivity in Gothic art. On the contrary, just as nature came under intense visual scrutiny as things in the world, so too did God's body enter into the theater of sensations. It was during this very period that artists began to produce a new range of powerful religious images, like the Man of Sorrows aimed at and constitutive of individuals rather than groups." Thomas Lentes discusses the late medieval gaze and comments specifically on the relationship of this gaze to the Mass of St. Gregory. See Thomas Lentes, "'As far as the eye can see…' Rituals of Gazing in the Late Middle Ages," in *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, (eds.) Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 369–71; Gormans and Lentes, *Die Bild der Erscheinung. Die Gregorsmesse.*

It was in just this world of a heightened role for seeing that the medieval viewer perceived the Brooklyn Mass of St. Gregory. It was not only looking, however since devotion and liturgy had their own realms of physical action and gesture, as well.[55] When the viewer saw Christ in the Brooklyn alabaster, Christ, in standing on the liturgical altar within the image and the liturgical altar of actual experience, stared back at them. The image was part of an experience which included a multiplicity of bodily activities which pushed and pulled the viewer. The Brooklyn panel was composed in a way which allowed it to be consumed through seeing. Commodification and desire for close somatic connection to God are both part of this fundamental new equation.

[55] Lentes, "As far as the eye can see," p. 361.

PART IV

PERFORMATIVITY AND EMPATHIC DEVOTIONAL PRACTICE

11. THE WELL OF MOSES AND ROLAND BARTHES'S 'PUNCTUM' OF PIETY*

Donna L. Sadler

In 1982 one hundred and seven victims sought help in the psychiatric wing of Santa Maria Novella after being dramatically affected by the city's great works of art. Dubbed the Stendhal syndrome after the French writer whose reaction upon visiting Florence in 1817 provoked a similar emotional experience; "On leaving the Santa Croce church, I felt a pulsating in my heart. Life was draining out of me, while I walked fearing a fall."[1] This rather perilous reaction to a work of art may be compared to Roland Barthes's idea of *punctum*, which he characterized as the part of a photograph that elicited an ineffable response from the viewer, "something that astonishes.... with an astonishment which endures and renews itself, inexhaustibly."[2] Barthes goes on to compare the effect of the photograph with resurrection, rather like the "image of Christ which impregnated St. Veronica's napkin: that it was not made by the hand of man, *acheiropoietos*?"[3]

Though we do not possess any first hand accounts of such a visceral reception of the so-called Well of Moses commissioned by Philip the Bold, the contemporary impact of the sculpted fountain (figs. 11.1 and 11.2) in the double cloister of the Chartreuse de Champmol is nothing short of breath-taking. Situated in the center of the large cloister of the Chartreuse de Champmol once stood a tall cross which emerged from a cluster of Old Testament prophets who presided over the deep well below. Every Carthusian monastery housed both a cross and a

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* The ideas presented in this article originated in a paper presented at the 44th International Congress on Medieval Studies, May, 2009.

[1] The Stendhal syndrome is also related to Hyperkuturemia, as well as to Jerusalem and Paris syndrome. These terms may loosely be gathered under the umbrella of culture shock. See James Elkins, *Pictures Tears. A History of People who have Cried in Front of Paintings* (London: Routledge, 2001) and cf. Kevin A. Morrison's Review of the above in *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 38/ 2 (Summer, 2004), pp. 120–24.

[2] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida Reflections on Photography*, translated by Richard Howard, (New York: Hill and Wang, A division of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1981), p. 82.

[3] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, p. 82.

Fig. 11.1 *Well of Moses*, Chartreuse de Champmol, *c.* 1395–1406, stone, polychromy. Photo: author.

Fig. 11.2 *Well of Moses*, Chartreuse de Champmol, *c*. 1395–1406, David and Moses, polychromy. Photo: author.

fountain at the heart of its cloister; however, the Champmol monument had little in common with its brother crosses, except that it served both as a cemetery cross as well as a source of irrigation for the monastery's orchard.[4] The function of these fountains was to provide both real and spiritual refreshment for the monks. The form assumed by these wells varied from a simple circular bird bath structure to a more elaborate, multi-tiered and ornamented fountain. For example, the small cloister of the monastery of the Chartreuse de Champmol had a well decorated with engaged columns and 68 capitals embellished with angels, fleur-de-lys and gargoyles spouting water.[5] Still, no cloistral fountain prepares one for the complex physical and symbolic extravaganza erected by Philip the Bold for Champmol.

The conception of a functional fountain that linked the prophecies of Christ's Passion with the Calvary that once crowned the monument was quite a stunning leap of faith (not to mention creative imagination) on the part of Claus Sluter who was given authority "pour faire une croix" by the Valois duke in 1395.[6] Approaching the fountain, the worshiper gazed upward at the stone prophets, eleven feet from the ground, which were conceived as sentries attached to a hexagonal core guarding the well below, while the Calvary group was twenty-five feet from the ground. Rising from a pool of water that symbolized the Fountain of Life, the six prophets foretold the Passion and six angels (fig. 11.3) in liturgical garments performed the role of an ancient Greek chorus supporting the statue group of the Calvary. The latter consisted of the crucified Christ flanked by Mary and Saint John, while Mary Magdalene was attached to the foot of the cross.[7] Susie Nash, on the other hand, argues that Mary Magdalene alone was found clinging to the feet of Christ.[8] The great cross, in either form, served as a public

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[4] Renate Prochno, "The Well of Moses," *Art from the Court of Burgundy The Patronage of Philip the Bold and John the Fearless 1364–1419* (Cleveland: The Cleveland Museum of Art, 2004), p. 213.

[5] See the accounts of Symon de Bois cited by Sherry C.M. Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality and Society at the Chartreuse de Champmol* (Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2008), p. 50.

[6] For a summary of the literature on the history of the Great Cross, see Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, pp. 56–60, notes 252–67. cf. Prochno, "The Well of Moses," pp. 213–21.

[7] The composition of the Calvary group has traditionally included the Virgin Mary, John the Evangelist, and Mary Magdalene. See Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, p. 56.

[8] Susie Nash, "Claus Sluter's 'Well of Moses' for the Chartreuse de Champmol Reconsidered: Part I," *Burlington Magazine* 147 (2005), pp. 798–809. cf. Lindquist, *Visuality, Agency* note 258 for her evaluation of this iconographic proposition.

Fig. 11.3 *Well of Moses*, Chartreuse de Champmol, *c*. 1395–1406, detail of angel. Photo: author.

vehicle for salvation as it objectified the continuity between the Old and New Testaments.

The purpose of this article is to scrutinize the drama that animates the figures composing the Well of Moses: how do we explain the pulsing temples of Isaiah, (fig. 11.4) the anger in Daniel's gesture, and the wrinkles in Moses's brow? (figs. 11.5, 11.6) In what way does the Well of Moses both bow to the ideals of Carthusian contemplation as well as engage the worshiper in the act of performative piety? Indeed, does this power to move the viewer correspond to the *punctum* Barthes elicits in the photograph's power to defeat time, to embody what has been and will be no longer?[9]

The earliest scholarship on the Well of Moses stressed the lively, interactive nature of the monument, seeking the key in the textual evidence provided by the prophets' scrolls. The latter were linked to the mystery plays of *The Trial of Jesus*[10] and to the *Story of Daniel*.[11] However, the words on the phylacteries echo the prophetic intonations of Christ's imminent sacrifice. Moses utters "…the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill the lamb in the evening" (*Exodus* 12, 6). Or David, in the 22nd book of the *Psalms* (16–17): "…they pierced my hands and my feet. I felt it in all my bones." These sentiments are echoed in the *Meditations on the Life of Christ* written by the Carthusian Ludolf of Saxony and would seem the more likely source of inspiration for Sluter's mute prophets.[12] Further, it appears that the stage directions of the *Meditations* more closely mirror the spirit of Sluter's monument.

Renate Prochno has suggested that there is a strong parallel between the Cult of the Passion and the plan of the Well of Moses.[13] For example, "the Cross remains constant while the world turns" almost mimics

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[9] Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, pp. 96–97.

[10] Emile Mâle, *Religious Art in France: The Late Middle Ages*, translated by Marthiel Matthews, 1908; reprint, (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 66–67, n. 138; cf. Emile Roy, *Le mystère de la Passion en France du 14e au 16e siècle: étude sur les sources et le classement des mystères de la Passion*, Dijon, 1903–04; reprint, (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1974) p. 436; Arthur J. Kleinclausz, *Claus Sluter et le sculpture bourguignonne au XVe siècle*, (Paris: Librairie de l'Art Ancien et Moderne, 1905), p. 368.

[11] Kathleen Morand, *Claus Sluter: Artist at the Court of Burgundy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991), I, p. 333.

[12] Prochno, "The Well of Moses," p. 219; cf. *Ludolphus of Saxony, Vita Jesu Christi*, edited by I.M. Rigollot, 4 vols. (Paris and Brussels: Societate Generali Librariae Catholicae, 1878).

[13] Prochno, "The Well of Moses," p. 219.

Fig. 11.4 *Well of Moses*, Chartreuse de Champmol, *c.* 1395–1406, detail of Isaiah. Photo: author.

Fig. 11.5 *Well of Moses*, Chartreuse de Champmol, *c.* 1395–1406, detail of Daniel and Isaiah. Photo: author.

Fig. 11.6 *Well of Moses*, Chartreuse de Champmol, *c.* 1395–1406, detail of Moses. Photo: author.

the action of the pilgrim (fig. 11.5) confronting the fountain at Champmol. It was the movement of the worshiper that initiated the dialogue between the prophets, which inspired the tears of the empathetic angels (fig. 11.7) that relayed the fulfillment of the Old Law in the Crucifixion above. The blood that oozed from Christ's body propelled the believer back towards the Old Testament witnesses to forge a symbolic union between the Passion of the Lord and the everlasting water of salvation of the *fons vitae*.[14] Thus, the Well of Moses remained in the center of the lives of the monks, both metaphorically and in reality.[15]

If one agrees upon the innately charged character of the Well of Moses, then it is important to pursue the ramifications of this phenomenon. It has been suggested that the individual paintings attributed to Beaumetz and others that adorn the cells of the Carthusian monks at Champmol share in the same exchange of visual energy. If we consider the *Crucifixion* from one of the monks' cells (fig. 11.8) (now housed in the Cleveland Museum of Art), the stark torture of Christ on the cross seems to be directed to the kneeling Carthusian alone, as Mary and John the Evangelist look away in private grief; the painted dialogue of the Passion and the hope for salvation thus becomes a spiritual exercise to assist the monk in his devotional prayers.[16] It is in the same fusion of sensory experiences that the blood virtually flowed into the laps of the monks who once prayed beneath the large *Lamentation of the Holy Trinity* tondo, now in the Louvre Museum, attributed to Jean Malouel, a work that was also commissioned by Philip the Bold for the monastery at Champmol. It has even been suggested that the six angels that weep and gesticulate on the left side of the wooden tondo may be inspired by the theatrical winged messengers on the Well of Moses.[17]

Thomas Boogaart has noted the multidimensionality of medieval processions in that they blend ritual, narrative, sound, and image in

[14] Prochno, "The Well of Moses," p. 213.

[15] Prochno, "The Well of Moses," p. 219.

[16] See Laura Gelfand, "'Y Me Tarde': The Valois, Pilgrimage and the Chartreuse de Champmol," in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, (eds.) Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe, (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2005), pp. 567–86. Gelfand explores the various artifacts of the Chartreuse de Champmol that would have triggered prayer by pilgrims and monks alike.

[17] See Prochno, "The Well of Moses," p. 217; cf. Philippe Lorentz, "Jean Malouel et les frères de Limbourg," in *Paris 1400: Les arts sous Charles VI*, (Paris: Fayard, 2004), pp. 94–99.

Fig. 11.7 *Well of Moses*, Chartreuse de Champmol, *c.* 1395–1406, detail of angel. Photo: author.

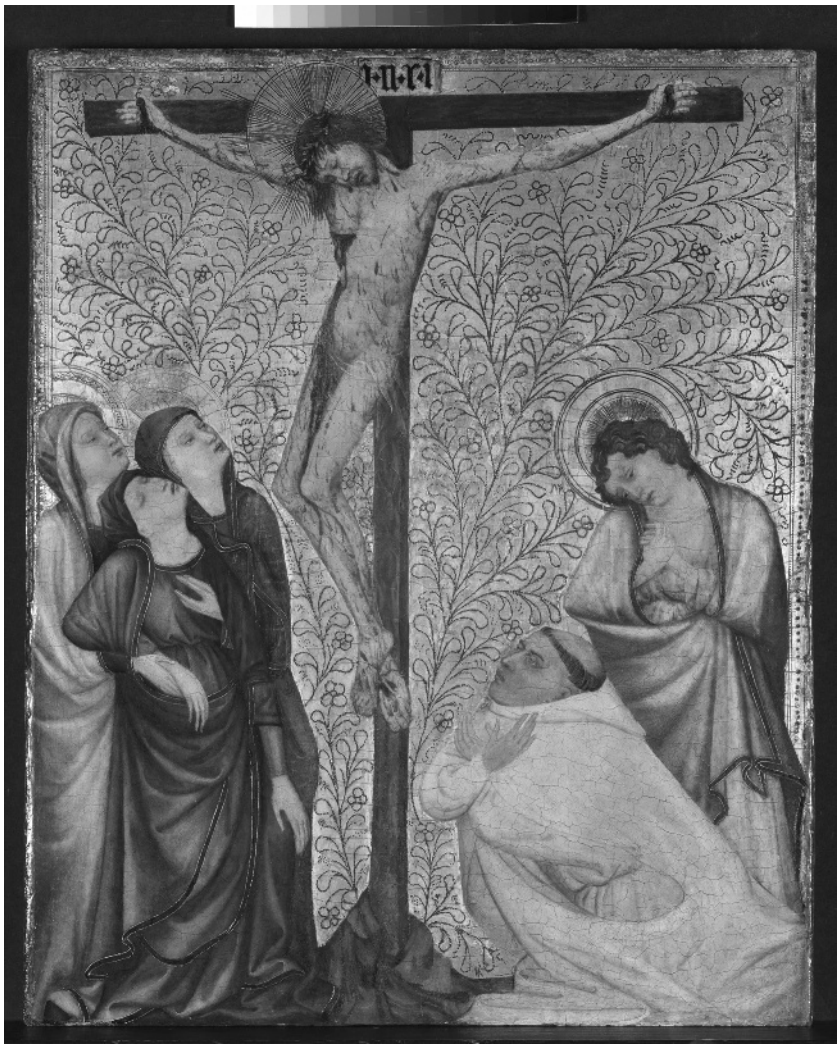

Fig. 11.8 Painting of the *Crucifixion*, attributed to Jean de Beaumetz and assistants, *c*. 1389–95, oil on oak, 56.5 × 45.5 cm. Photo: courtesy of the Cleveland Museum of Art.

unique ways.[18] The literal movement through space that the pilgrim undertakes in his journey through the meaning of the Well of Moses (fig. 11.2) not only reflects the ideology of the Christian faith, but also creates the fusion of patron, participant, and political event. For it is important to remember that the Valois duke commissioned this Cross during his crusade to Nicopolis, which would end in total defeat. But his hopes were fastened on regaining the Holy Land, as this was the prize that made manifest his spiritual and political ambitions. Just as the prophets testified to the destiny of Christ on the cross, so could they witness the terrestrial redemption Philip the Bold might secure for the duchy of Burgundy.

It is in tracing the formal prototype for the Well of Moses that one encounters the iconographic agent of these political, spiritual, and ideological associations: dotting the landscape between Paris and the abbey of Saint-Denis, Philippe le Hardi, Louis IX's son and namesake of "our Philip," erected a series of *Montjoies* (fig. 11.9) to mark the stops of Saint Louis's funeral cortege.[19] The *Montjoies*, then, were identified with the Capetian ruler's martyrdom on crusade in Tunis and thus provided a charged symbolic form for the Valois duke.[20]

The Well of Moses has been dubbed both an ideological as well as structural descendant of the *Montjoies*.[21] The latter consist of seven or possibly nine Rayonnant structures that had hexagonal bases that gave rise to niches that in turn lodged statues of kings on the pedestals

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[18] Thomas A. Boogaart II, "Procession and Community in Late Medieval Bruges," in *Moving Subjects: Processional Performance in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, (eds.) Kathleen Ashley and Wim Hüsken, (Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V), 2001, p. 72.

[19] For a brief definition of *Monjoies* see Donna L. Sadler, *Montjoie*, *MacMillan Dictionary of Art*, 8, (London: MacMillan Publishers, 1996), p. 197. cf. Robert Branner, "The Montjoies of Saint Louis," *Essays in the History of Architecture presented to Rudolf Wittkower*, (eds.) Douglas Fraser, Howard Hibbard & Milton J. Lewine, (Bath, Great Britain: The Pitman Press, 1967), pp. 13–16; Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, "Les *montjoies* de la plaine Saint-Denis," *Bulletin Monumental* 134/ 3 (1976), p. 261; for the etymology of the term, see Anne Lombard-Jourdan, *"Montjoie et saint Denis!" Le centre de la Gaule aux origins de Paris et de Saint-Denis* (Paris: CNRS, 1989), pp. 324–31.

[20] For the general phenomenon of the transformation of symbolic signs into ideological signifiers, see Colette Beaune, *The Birth of an Ideology. Myths and Symbols of Nation in Late-Medieval France*, transl. by Susan Ross Huston and (ed.) by Fredric L. Cheyette (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 67–68; 90–125.

[21] See Christian de Mérindol, "Art, spiritualité et politique, Philippe le Hardi et la Chartreuse de Champmol, nouvel apercu" in *Les Chartreux et l'art: XIV^e–XVIII^e siècle: Actes du Xe colloque international d'histoire et de spiritualité Cartusiennes (Villeneuve-Lès-Avignon, 15–18 Septembre 1988)*, (eds.) Alain Girard and Daniel le Blèvec (Paris: Cerf, 1989), pp. 93–115.

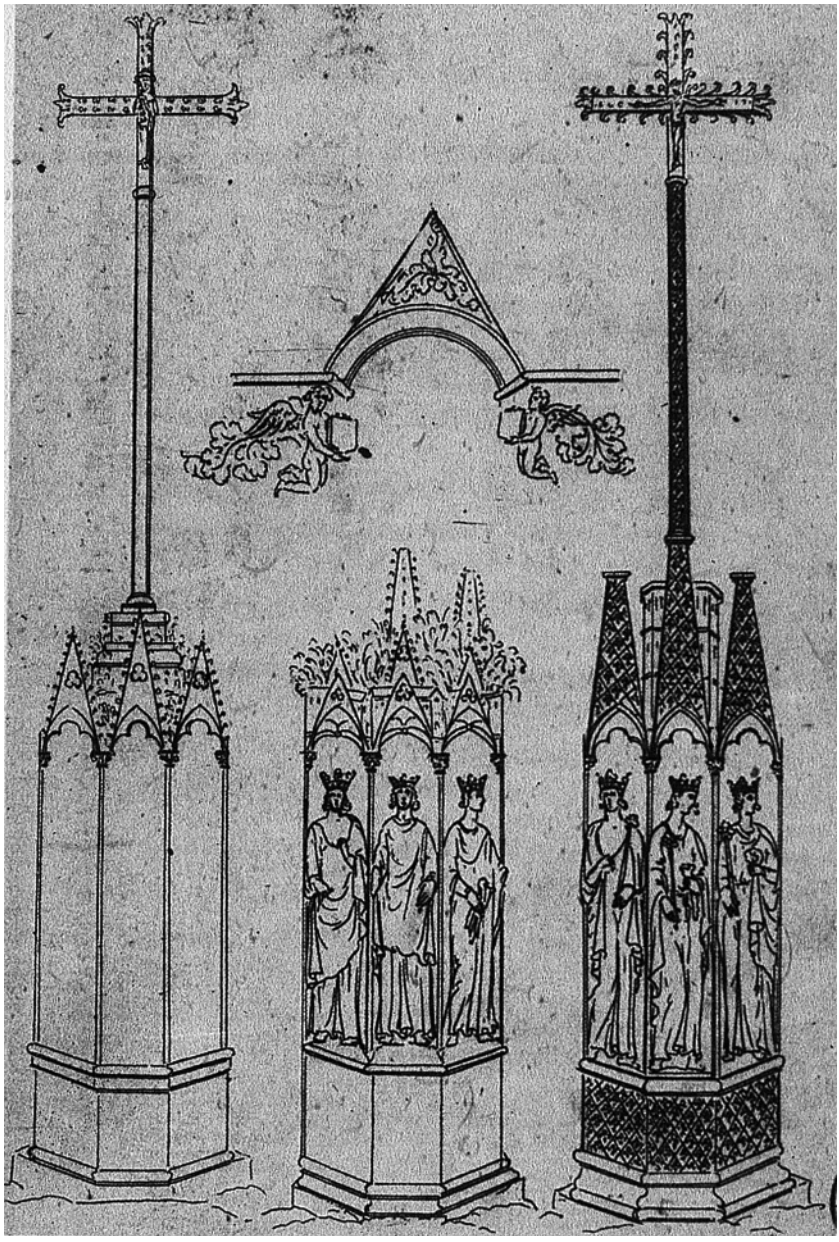

Fig. 11.9 Montjoies, anonymous etching, end of the 17th century. Photo: author.

of the *Montjoies*. Although the statues were not individualized, later sources identified the kings as Louis VIII, Louis IX, and Philip III.[22] Branner suggested that all the figures represented Louis IX (say it three times, and it is true?); whereas Lombard-Jourdan assigned the royal statues a more generic identity, that of the royal forebears represented in the galleries of kings in French Gothic cathedrals.[23] In either case, the *Montjoies* were symbols of royalty and signaled the miracles performed by Louis IX's relics. In exchange for homage to the cult of ancestors, the *montjoies* offered protection to pilgrims traveling to the Abbey of Saint-Denis. Branner traced them to the crosses erected on the trail of miracles wrought by St. Remi's relics, while Lombard-Jourdan linked them to the stops made by the decapitated body of St. Denis.[24] Thus, both interpretations connect the *montjoies* to the sacred origins of France and the saintliness of the Capetian kings who manned the stone pedestal.[25]

Ostensibly this would be a case of appropriating a royal model in order to reap the rich harvest of Capetian associations. The relatively recent apotheosis of the goddess Memory in medieval studies would suggest that the Well of Moses might be in effect a reservoir of royal meaning.[26] I have argued elsewhere that the Well represents the transformation of a royal symbol into a site of political and religious memory envisioned by Philip the Bold to further ally himself to the saintly Louis IX. Philip the Bold modeled his reign after that of Saint Louis

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[22] See above, note 20.

[23] Branner, 13–16; Anne Lombard-Jordan, "*Montjoies* et *Montjoie* dans la plaine de St.-Denis," *Bulletin monumental*, 25(1974), pp. 141–81.

[24] Branner, "The *Montjoies*," pp. 14–15; Lombard-Jordan, "*Montjoies* et *Montjoie*" (1974), pp. 172–78.

[25] Although none of the Montjoies survived the Revolution, they are compared to the Eleanor crosses in England which were erected in imitation of the French monuments. See John Zukowsky, "Montjoies and Eleanor Crosses Reconsidered," *Gesta* 13/1, (1974), pp. 39–44.

[26] There are many symptoms of this phenomenon, but perhaps one of the most telling contributions was Pierre Nora's publication *of Les lieux de mémoire* in 1984. The series grew to be seven volumes and demonstrated that sites do remain constant, but memories do not! See James Wilkinson, "A Choice of Fictions: Historians, Memory, and Evidence," *PMLA* 111/1 (1996), pp. 80–92. In the wake of the publications of Frances Yates. *The Art of Memory* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966) and particularly Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) and *The Medieval Craft of Memory. An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, (eds.) Carruthers and Jan M. Ziolkowski (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2002), art historians have contributed a new chapter to this growing body of literature.

in befriending the Carthusians, taking up the Cross at Nicopolis, and in fashioning a royal necropolis in the chapel of the Chartreuse de Champmol.[27] Though Philip lacked the sanctity of Louis IX, he had Claus Sluter, whose chisel could render the duke's visual campaign to forge an intersection between the time of Saint Louis and the space of a Valois duke. The Well of Moses, (fig. 11.2) then, becomes a charged mnemonic device that surpasses in function and beauty the Gothic road markers (fig. 11.9) that inspired it.[28] The monument becomes a site of collective royal memory, functioning on both a practical and symbolic level. But could the Well of Moses embody another level of devotion that is both interior and private, emanating from the sculptural statement and touching the corporeal eye of the late medieval period? It is just this sort of exchange that Roland Barthes describes in his late work, *Camera Lucida*, on photography.[29]

The cross was a constant reminder of the centrality of Christ's sacrifice in the monks' lives.[30] By identifying with the penitent and prone figure of Mary Magdalene the pilgrims would partake of the grace conferred on the fountain by Christ's sacrifice.[31] The latter gave rise to the blood, which according to Ludolph of Saxony, was the source of the fountain of life.[32] We know that Papal Indulgences were granted in 1418, 1432, and 1445 to visit the centerpiece of Philip the Bold's gifts to the Carthusians.[33] How did the countless pilgrims, both male and

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[27] I presented this idea at the 32nd International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, MI, 1997 in a paper entitled "The future of Medieval Paris, or how Louis IX and his son Philip III colored the artistic patronage of Philip the Bold of Burgundy."

[28] The multivalence of the Well of Moses is beautifully captured by Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, pp. 164–75), who views the monument in terms of Carthusian prayer and reading practices, with the prophets' introspective glances and emphasis on the word and acts of devotion.

[29] Barthes, *Camera lucida*, particularly pp. 80–82.

[30] Prochno, "The Well of Moses," p. 219. The Carthusian order's motto "Stat crux dum volvitur orbis" (The cross remains constant while the world turns) shares a felicitous harmony with the lazy-susan aspect of the prophets who propel the base of the Well of Moses beneath the Crucifixion.

[31] It is particularly Mary Magdalene's pose embracing the feet of Christ on the cross that provided a model for the worshipers who visited the Well of Moses. See Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, pp. 56; 172; cf. Nash, "…Champmol reconsidered," pp. 807–809; The image of the fragment of the crossed arms of the Magdalene (Lindquist, fig. 2.22) imparts a powerful impression of what the figure in its entirety would have engendered.

[32] Prochno, "The Well of Moses," p. 219; cf, Ludolf of Saxony's *Vita Christi* as cited in Morand, *Claus Sluter*, I, p. 106.

[33] Morand, *Claus Sluter*, I, pp. 107–110.

female, participate in the reenactment of the sacraments embodied in Sluter's fountain? Could the structural affinities between the Great Cross and the *Montjoies* reveal another level that underscores their royal patronage? Like the Well of Moses, the *Montjoies* were imbued with a sacred function even though neither one occupied the interior of a liturgical space. Lindquist has demonstrated how the position of the "Great Cross" in the large cloister of the Chartreuse de Champmol served to regiment the degree of salvation available to the royal patrons, the pilgrims, and the monks. Pilgrims were routed from the gatehouse directly to the Great Cross so that they did not penetrate other monastic spaces.[34] Thus, in a very tangible way the Carthusians orchestrated the degree of spiritual and contemplative devotion accessible to the lay population in their encounter with Sluter's Great Cross; the highest level of piety and religious zeal towards this monument to the sacraments of the Church was reserved for the monastic community alone. Did Philip the Bold and Margaret of Flanders also enjoy a privileged position with regard to the Great Cross?[35]

The Well of Moses (fig. 11.2) was emblematic of Philip the Bold's patronage and posited his presence on Burgundian soil. Surrounding the base of the prophets' plinth is the duke's coat of arms to remind both monks and pilgrims alike that the Valois duke financed the Passion recreated by the Great Cross.[36] If we adjust the great Cross to assume its late medieval orientation, one is confronted with King David (fig. 11.2) in the central position rather than the painfully horned countenance of Moses. The former, flanked by Moses and Jeremiah, is the precursor of Christ and link to the three races of kings of France who all trace their legitimacy to David.[37] Further, the two angels that flank the figure (fig. 11.10) both turn to acknowledge him, whereas the other

[34] Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, pp. 196–97.

[35] Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, pp. 196–97; Arguing that the Chartreuse de Champmol became an ersatz Jerusalem to the "Passion-minded pilgrims," Lindquist goes on to suggest that the monks were quite aware of the hierarchy that governed society, from the public's managed access to the Great Cross to the ducal oratory that possessed a door communicating directly with the outside, i.e., their own direct line to the Well of Moses.

[36] Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, p. 167, rightly underscores the significant alliance between King David and Philip the Bold: "…David was also a figure who effectively combined ducal and monastic status, as he was also the author of the *Psalms* that the religious daily prayed in their performance of the Divine Office." Cf. Gelfand, "'*Y Me Tarde*'," pp. 567–86.

[37] Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, p. 167. See p. 187, n. 178 for the Latin inscriptions found on the scrolls of the Well of Moses prophets.

Fig. 11.10 *Well of Moses*, Chartreuse de Champmol, *c*. 1395–1406, detail of angel between David and Moses. Photo: author.

angels follow the hexagonal movement of the pier to which they are attached. Not only does David wear a crown of fleurs-de-lys so imbued with the French monarchy, but his mantle is also decorated with harps (fig. 11.2); the P's and M's of the ducal couple, seen on the base of the trumeau of the portal of the chapel of the Chartreuse de Champmol once punctuated the cornice above the prophets.[38]

The significance of David's primary position underscores his role both as Christ's precursor, as well as genealogical keystone of the Capetians as the latter saw in this ruler the ideal of Christian kingship; in the coronation *ordines* the ruler was hailed as a New David.[39] The apotheosis of David and his reign was emulated by the new house of the Valois, in perpetuation of the ideals of their Capetian role models. Moses, (fig. 11.2) who assumes the honorific position to David's

[38] Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, pp. 55–60; 167. The author points out that the repetition of the harps on the brocaded trim of David's garment underscores his role as the psalmist. The nineteenth-century lithograph by Émile Sagot in the BnF of the Well of Moses reveals Philip's coat of arms on the base of the Well, as well as the initials of the couple above the prophets.

[39] Ernst Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae: A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Mediaeval Ruler Worship* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1946), p. 57.

right, holds the tablets of law in one hand, and notes on a scroll in his other hand that this is a miraculous fountain.[40] Jeremiah, (fig. 11.11) to David's left, holds an amazingly rendered book and once wore copper spectacles, the same glasses, documents reveal, that Philip the Bold wore.[41] Daniel (fig. 11.5) points accusingly at his banderole and glares at Isaiah, though the latter seems to escape the charge of his neighbor by his sheer venerability.[42] Zachariah, (fig. 11.12) with open ink well and pen, holds his freshly written scroll and seems the most self-contained of the prophets.[43] The verisimilitude that characterizes the depiction of the prophets underscores the present tense of Sluter's monument. And it is from the inescapable presence of the Carthusian monastery cross that the prophets' words and the Valois duke's patronage seemed to emanate into the large, verdant cloister that served as its backdrop.

The Well of Moses proffered perpetual salvation to the faithful. We have seen that pilgrims visited the Great Cross throughout the 15th century. Did they circle the fountain as the re-enactment of the sacraments unfolded before them? Previous scholars have stressed the interdependence of medieval drama and this sculptural tour de force; indeed, one writer suggests that Zacharias' beard is false (fig. 11.12) and that David's hair (fig. 11.2) is modeled on a theatrical wig.[44] In lieu of arguing for a direct influence between drama, thaumaturgy, and the sculptural work found at the Chartreuse de Champmol, I would suggest that they share the ability to capture the "quick" in dramatic terms of their respective audiences.[45] The dramatic nature of this monument relies on Sluter's ability to transform the prophecy of Christ's death

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[40] Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, p. 167; cf. Morand, *Claus Sluter*, I, pp. 104–105.

[41] Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, p. 170.

[42] Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, p. 167; here the author posits the contrast between the reading versus the speaking prophets, however, one might also see this as the *vita activa* juxtaposed to the *vita contemplativa*. See pls. 4.26 and 4.29. Cf. Morand, *Claus Sluter*, I, pp. 102–106.

[43] Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, pp. 170–72. Morand, *Claus Sluter*, I, p. 105, noted that the angels lurking between Zachariah and Daniel and between Moses and David, are clad in liturgical garments worn only during the celebration of the Mass.

[44] Stella Mary Newton, *Renaissance Theatre, Costume and the sense of the historic past* (London: Rapp and Whiting, 1975), p. 144 cited in Mary C. Erler, "Palm Sunday Prophets and Processions and Eucharistic Controversy," *Renaissance Quarterly* 48/1 (1995), p. 67, n. 17.

[45] This framework has been used by Theodore K. Lerud in "Quick Images: Memory and the English Corpus Christi Drama," in *Moving Subjects: Processional Performance in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, (eds.) Kathleen Ashley and Wim Hüsken (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 2001), pp. 213–37.

Fig. 11.11 *Well of Moses*, Chartreuse de Champmol, *c.* 1395–1406, detail of Jeremiah. Photo: author.

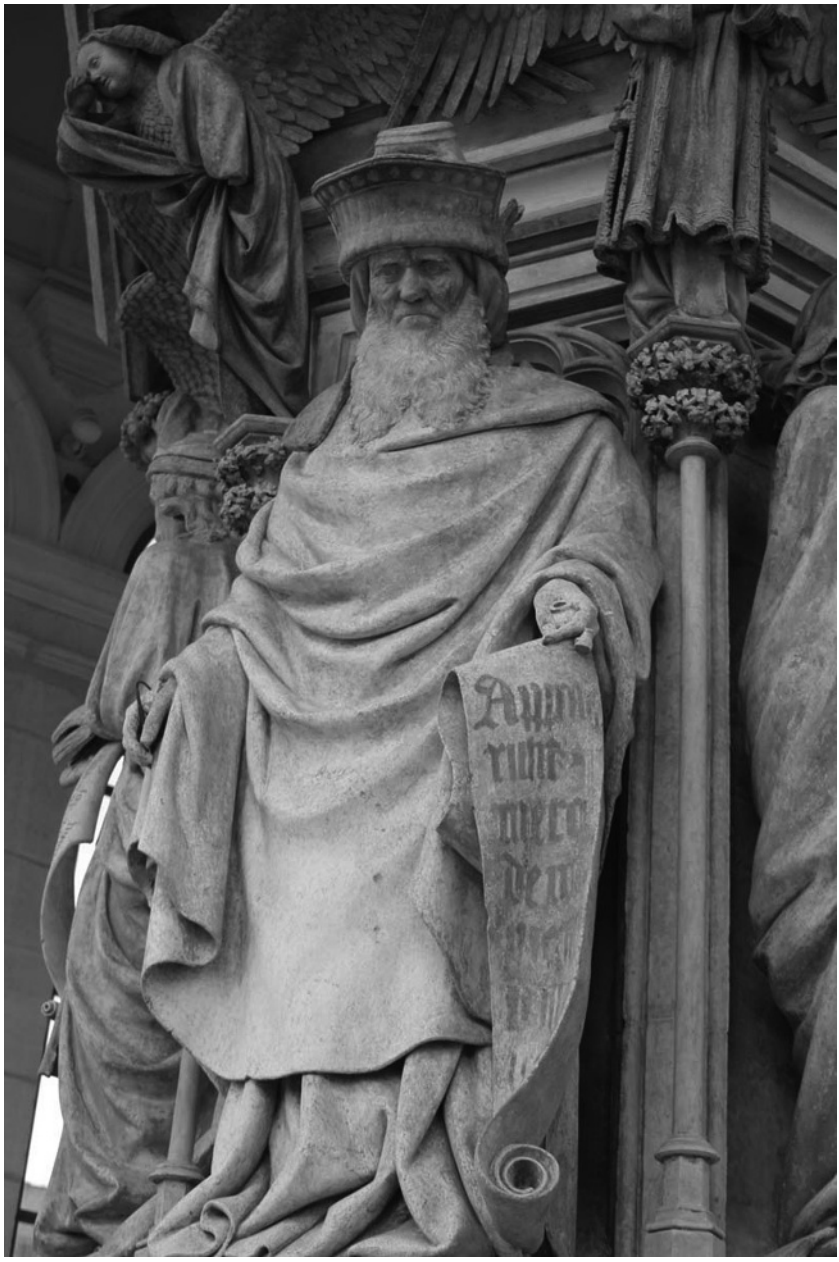

Fig. 11.12 *Well of Moses*, Chartreuse de Champmol, *c.* 1395–1406, detail of Zachariah. Photo: author.

and its execution above into a poignant, perpetual mise en scène. As Holly Johnson demonstrated with late-medieval sermons, the audience was invited to enter into the events of the Passion as participants. The preacher, or in this case, Sluter, fashioned the devotion of the audience, (fig. 11.1) creating an intimacy between the latter and the suffering of Christ.[46] Just as Sluter reveals the tragedy of the prophets' vision and the depth of the angels' sorrowful reaction to the Passion, so the viewer performs his response to the drama of the Great Cross. Sluter's objectification of the sacraments works on a number of different levels: personal and subjective, collective and political, and finally, familial and dynastic. In this way the worshiper arrives at the intersection of faith, liturgy, and ritual.[47]

The visual tactics waged by Sluter resulted in what Lerud dubbed a simulacra designed to move the viewer.[48] Following Aquinas's model, both visual tableaux and religious plays were *phantasmata* which served as the link between body and soul, sense and understanding. Just as the blood from Christ's wounds filled the basin of the Well of Moses, linking the Passion and Baptism through the words of the prophets, so did the cross represent the presence of Philip the Bold in the midst of the Carthusisan monastery. As Arnade has demonstrated, triumphal entries into medieval cities often utilized a number of the same devices employed in late medieval art, such as scaffolding, personifications who "speak" the meaning of the tableau, and the incorporation of various "extras" to perform the ritual on display.[49] The effect of this process was to inculcate the members of the culture in the meaning of the civic entry. Considering the Burgundian court's love of ephemeral art and processions in the fifteenth century, it is not surprising that Sluter sought to imbue the Well of Moses with both the immediacy and permanence of a Passion play in stone. Philip the Bold's use of monuments resonated with that of Louis IX, instilling

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[46] Holly Johnson, "Fashioning Devotion: The Art of Good Friday Preaching in Chaucerian England," in *Speculum Sermonis: Interdisciplinary Reflections on the Medieval Sermon*, (eds.) Georgiana Donavin, Cary J. Nederman, and Richard J. Utz (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), p. 325.

[47] It is also in this way that I would argue the Great Cross performs its pious task as a late medieval exemplar of piety, rather than one circumscribed by the great cathedral programs, etc.

[48] Lerud, "Quick Images," p. 213.

[49] Peter J. Arnade, *Realms of Ritual: Burgundian Ceremony and Civic Life in Late Medieval Ghent* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996) for an insightful overview of the role of processions in the neighboring city of Ghent.

in the Burgundians a sense of pride that their leader walked along the path once taken by "the most Christian king."

Roland Barthes, in his analysis of the medium of photography in *Camera Lucida*, refers to the viewer's experience of the work as a *Tableau Vivant*.[50] It is in particular by focusing on the emotional and psychological effect of detail that Barthes's conception of a reciprocal process of projection on the part of the viewer takes place.[51] What Barthes terms 'punctum' depends both on the viewer and on the work of art; the 'punctum' is the detail in the image that opens it to the depths of our fully embodied subjectivity by pricking our memory.[52] The 'punctum,' according to Barthes, is in contrast to the 'studium' of the work, which would be the conventional depiction of, in this case, the Passion of Christ.[53] For Barthes, the 'punctum' is the "sting, speck, cut, little hole—and also a cast of the dice. A photograph's 'punctum' is that accident which pricks me, but also bruises me, is poignant to me."[54] The 'punctum' in other words emanates from the object and is realized in the eye of the beholder, a system of perception that operates on a principle familiar to medieval optical theory, that of intromission. For example, Barthes in ruminating about the art of photography positis the following:

> The photograph is literally an emanation of the referent. From the real body, which was there, proceed radiations which ultimately touch me, who am here; the duration of the transmission is insignificant; the

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[50] Barthes, *Camera lucida*, pp. 31–32; 55–59; 91. For an analysis of the relationship between Barthes's use of *tableau vivant* and *punctum*, see Michael Fried, "Barthes's *Punctum*," *Critical Inquiry* 31 (Spring, 2005), pp. 539–74.

[51] Barthes, *Camera lucida*, pp. 53–55. The nature of the '*punctum*' is expressed a number of ways throughout the *Camera Lucida*, however, this definition is the most tantalizing and elusive: "Ultimately—or at its limit—in order to see a photograph well, it is best to look away or close your eyes. The necessary condition for an image is sight," Janouch told Kafka; and Kafka smiled and replied: "We photograph things in order to drive them out of our minds. My stories are a way of shutting my eyes." The photograph must be silent;… Absolute subjectivity is achieved only in a state, an effort of silence (shutting your eyes is to make the image speak in silence). The photograph touches me if I withdraw it from its usual blah-blah: 'Technique,' 'Reality,' 'Reportage,' 'Art,' etc: to say nothing, to shut my eyes, to allow the detail to rise of its own accord into affective consciousness."

[52] Barthes, *Camera lucida*, pp. 26–27.

[53] Barthes, *Camera lucida*, p. 26. I am extrapolating herein assigning the Passion of Christ the role of *stadium* in the case of the Great Cross erected by Sluter at the Chartreuse de Champmol. The *studium* consists of the general human interest of the photograph—its "figures, the faces, the gestures, the settings, the actions."

[54] Barthes, *Camera lucida*, p. 27.

> photograph of the missing being, as Sontag says, will touch me like the delayed rays of a star. A sort of umbilical cord links the body of the photographed thing to my gaze: light, though impalpable, is here a carnal medium, a skin I share with anyone who has been photographed.[55]

As Katherine Tachau has demonstrated in the equation of Grosseteste's system of perception, both the object and the corporeal eye emit rays of light that illuminate the 'punctum,' if you will.[56] But to this two-way street the medieval theorist added the spiritual eye whose rays irradiate the spiritual light that may conspire with the corporeal eye to signify the presence of the divinity.[57] In her study of self-portraiture as performative embodiment, Amelia Jones has compared the photographs of Hannah Wilke's ravaged body, (fig. 11.13) consumed with cancer and close to death in the Intra-Venus series from 1982 to the *Dead Christ* by Mantegna of 1500 in the Brera Gallery in Milan, in which we are confronted with the humanity of a god figure.[58] In the former instance the photograph captures the inexorable fate of the diseased human subject, whereas the divine transcendence of the Dead Christ is reflected in the bloodless stigmata.

The language of 'punctum' is very reminiscent of late medieval spirituality and its admonition to dwell in the wounds of Christ, for these wounds possessed the power to sting the heart and bring the Passion to life in the worshiper's soul.[59] But Barthes's ideas exceed the

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[55] Barthes, *Camera lucida*, pp. 80–81.

[56] Katherine H. Tachau, "Seeing as Action and Passion in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries" in *The Mind's Eye Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, (eds.) Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 336–59. See Suzannah Biernoff, *Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan Publishers, 2002), for medieval optics in general and Grosseteste in particular, pp. 67–73. Cf. Hans Henrik Lohfert Jørgensen, "Cultic Vision—Seeing as Ritual: Visual and Liturgical Experience in the Early Christian and Medieval Church," in *The Appearances of Medieval Rituals The Play of Construction and Modification*, (edd.) Nils Holger Petersen, Mette Birkedal Bruun, Jeremy Llewellyn,and Eyolf Østrem (Turnhout: Brepols Publishers, 2004), pp. 173–97, esp. 179 where the active role of the eye is explored.

[57] Tachau, "Seeing as Action," esp. pp. 344–46.

[58] Amelia Jones, "The 'Eternal Returns': Self-Portrait Photography as a Technology of Embodiment," *Signs* 27/4 (Summer, 2002), pp. 947–78, esp. 955.

[59] The bibliography on late medieval piety is extensive and particular to geographic regions. For a general overview of the topic, see Caroline Walker Bynum, *Wonderful Blood Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007). The development and spread of the Mass of the Five Wounds did much to propagate this exclusive devotion to the wounds of Christ. See Dom Louis Gougaud, *Devotional and Ascetic Practices in the Middle Ages*, (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1927), pp. 80–91; James

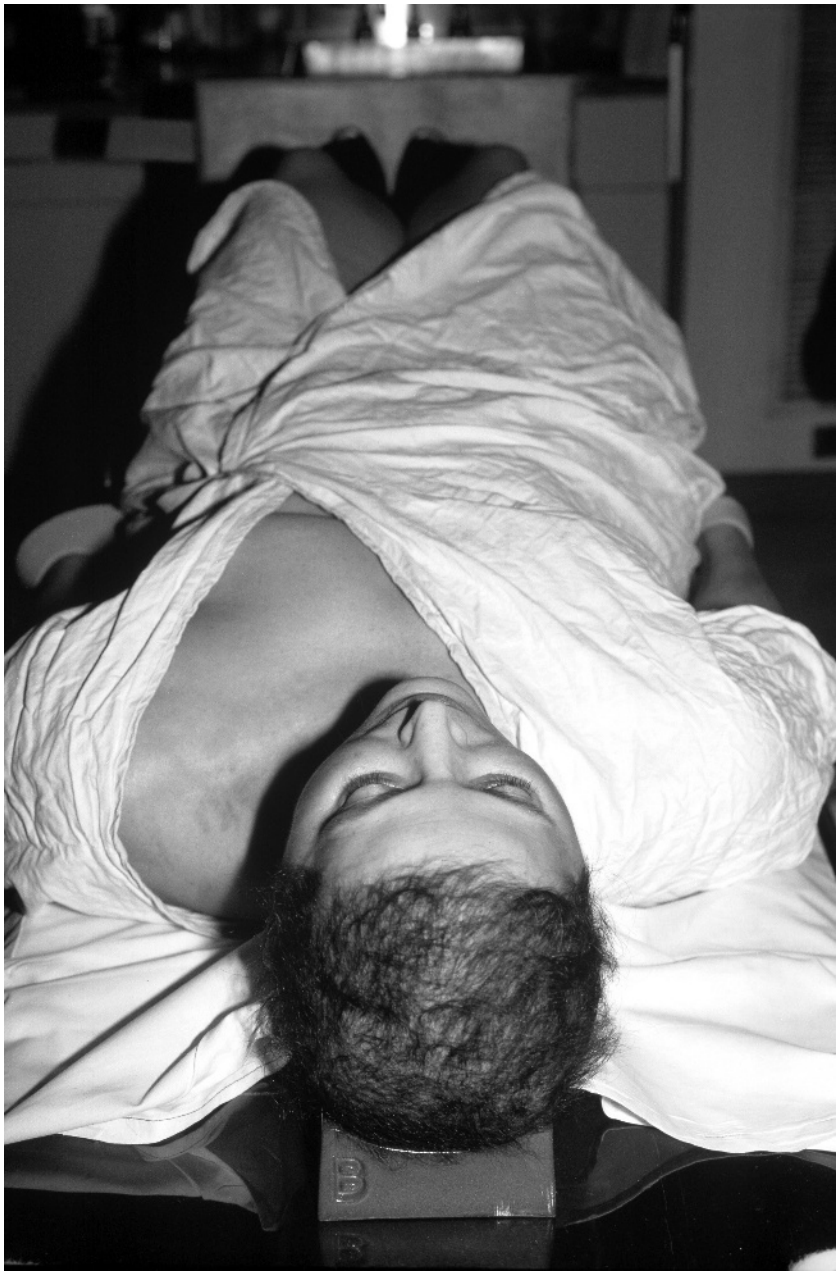

Fig. 11.13 Hannah Wilke, *Intra-Venus series*, 1991–92. Performist Self-Portrait with Donald Goddard, chromagenic supergloss print. Photo: Courtesy Donald and Helen Goddard and Ronald Feldman Fine Arts.

boundaries of catharsis in that by re-forming the image by perceiving it, the subject achieves immortality, yet at the same time dies. In Barthes's words: "I am neither subject nor object but a subject who feels he is becoming an object: I then experience a micro-version of death…I am truly becoming a specter."[60] If we try to simulate the pilgrim's experience of the Well of Moses, (fig. 11.2) wouldn't the verisimilitude have conditioned the very response to the pivoting prophets, the emotive angels, the towering figure of Christ on the cross above? Sluter's masterpiece belongs to what Sarah Stanbury dubs a period of dynamic image culture in which the devotional experience is dictated by the visual spectacle.[61] Again, the comparison to living theater underscores the expressive nature of the work, which in turn triggers the 'punctum' that engages the soul of the viewer. For Barthes, photography most resembled theater because of the latter's original association with the cult of the Dead:

> The first actors separated themselves from the community by playing the role of the Dead; to make oneself up was to designate oneself as a body simultaneously living and dead.… Photography is a kind of primitive theater, a kind of *Tableau Vivant*, as figuration of the motionless and made-up face beneath which we see the dead.[62]

F. Burke, *Desire against the Law: The Juxtaposition of Contraries in Early Medieval Spanish Literature* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), pp. 265–68, n. 21–39; 1–19 evokes the scholarship of L. Scanlon, R. Trexler, S.H. González, and N. Morgan who explore the metaphorical nature of Christ's wounds. J. Wirth, M. Camille, and S. Beckwith address the wounds as the entrance site through which the faithful gain access to participate in Christ's physical and mystical body. Donna Spivey Ellington, "Impassioned Mother or Passive Icon: The Virgin's Role in Late Medieval and Early Modern Passion Sermons," *Renaissance Quarterly* 48/ 2 (Summer, 1995), pp. 227–61, explores the sermons surrounding the Virgin's devotion to the Passion of Christ. Also, cf. Kathleen Kamerick, *Popular Piety and Art in the Late Middle Ages Image Worship and Idolatry in England 1350–1500* (Hampshire: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 166–75, n. 38–55; Also, Douglas Gray, "The Five Wounds of Our Lord," *Notes and Queries* 208 (1963), pp. 50–51; 82–89; 127–34; 163–68. Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars Traditional Religion in England 1400–1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 238–48 correlates the wounds of Christ to particular human sins, yet at the same time they are antidotes to particular vices. Thus, the cult of the wounds rendered the latter the means for entering into Christ's heart, and thus became a symbol of the refuge of his love.

[60] Barthes, *Camera lucida*, p. 14.

[61] See Sarah Stanbury, "The Vivacity of Images: St. Katherine, Knighton's Lollards, and the Breaking of Idols" in, *Images, Idolatry, and Iconoclasm in Late Medieval England*, (eds.) Jeremy Dimmick, James Simpson, and Nicolette Zeeman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 131–50.

[62] Barthes, *Camera lucida*, pp. 31–32.

Beneath the skillful chisel of Claus Sluter, the living and the dead comingle in the celebration of the sacraments of the Church. (fig. 11.3) Christ's blood symbolically flows into the Fountain of Life into which all men are baptized into a new life, one sanctified by the prophecies of the Old Testament figures and punctuated by the angels dressed in liturgical robes. The 'punctum' is the wound in Christ's side that binds all pilgrims to the Passion. The life promised by the Well of Moses is like the life of a photograph that is supplanted by the memory of the now lifeless image. This is the reciprocity engendered by the gaze of the worshiper as he perceives the performative 'punctum' of the Well of Moses. Indeed, both the Well of Moses and the photograph demand a type of death of the worshiper/viewer: that is the price of salvation.

Jean de Marville and subsequently Claus Sluter demonstrate an even greater degree of visual immediacy in the tomb (fig. 11.14) designed and executed for Philip the Bold (1384–1410).[63] The funeral cortege that carried the body of the Valois duke from the city of Halles where he expired back to the Chartreuse de Champmol is commemorated by the forty-two alabaster *pleurants* who, dressed in Carthusian robes with heads beneath cowls, perpetually reenact this very human funerary dirge.[64] In their varied attitudes of grief, these mourners (fig. 11.15) reinforced the liminal experience of moving from life to death: with open books and heads bowed in sorrow, they typologized the mourning experienced on behalf of Philip the Bold as well as served to remind the living monks to say their prayers for the duke's soul. Echoing the liturgy of the Carthusians in disposition and gesture, the sculpted *pleurants* reflected the devotion performed by the monks. In a very real sense, the monks' prayers were transformed into the art of commemoration, just as the Well of Moses (fig. 11.2) proffered perpetual salvation to the faithful.

Though the visual ensemble of Champmol did not rival the sophisticated statecraft waged in the artistic campaigns of Louis IX and his son, it did betray a new relationship between the beholder and the

[63] The commission for the tomb of Philip the Bold was given to Jean de Marville's workshop and most scholars agree that the arcaded gallery under which the *pleurents* parade was already in place when Sluter joined the workshop in March, 1385. See Morand, *Claus Sluter*, I, pp. 121–32; Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, pp. 139–48; Prochno, "The Tomb of Philip the Bold," pp. 222–36. It should be noted that the prototype for the tomb with mourners filing along the sides was created for Louis IX's youngest son, Louis, who died *c.* 1260.

[64] Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality*, p. 142.

Fig. 11.14 Tomb of Philip the Bold, Museum of Fine Arts, Dijon, *c.* 1406. Photo: author.

Fig. 11.15 Tomb of Philip the Bold, Museum of Fine Arts, Dijon, *c.* 1406. Detail of Mourners. Photo: author.

beheld. The undercurrent of animation that triggered such staggering moments of realism engendered a new mimetic rapport between the sculpture and the viewer. Had Sluter wielding his chisel crossed paths with Barthes spouting the literary theory *du jour*, they may have had little to say to one another. Yet Sluter's works possess the ability to "sting.... prick, bruise, and be poignant," and Barthes recognized that certain monuments were to be contemplated alone, with prayers uttered under the breath, in the regime of the *spectatio*.[65]

[65] Barthes, *Camera lucida*, pp. 81, 97.

12. SIN AND REDEMPTION IN LATE-MEDIEVAL ART AND THEATER: THE MAGDALEN AS ROLE MODEL IN HUGO VAN DER GOES'S VIENNA DIPTYCH*

Mark Trowbridge

In a work probably made for private devotion and today in Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum, Hugo van der Goes united two distinctly different themes, the *Fall of Man* (32.3 × 21.9 cm/12 5/8 × 8 5/8") and the *Lamentation*. (34.4 × 22.8 cm/13 1/2 × 9") (figs. 12.1, 12.2) Stylistic evidence suggests that these two wings were painted at different times; indeed the diptych has long served as a cornerstone in establishing a chronology for Hugo's works.[1] The *Fall of Man*, its figures obviously indebted to Jan and Hubert van Eycks' *Holy Lamb Altarpiece*, seems more likely to have been created while Hugo was in Ghent; figures from the *Lamentation*, on the other hand, are closer to those found in works from Brabant, especially from the circles of Rogier van der Weyden and Dirk Bouts, suggesting that panel came from Hugo's tenure in the Rood Klooster outside Brussels, which began around 1476.[2] Furthermore, the wood for each panel of the diptych comes from trees

* This essay develops a paper originally presented at the quadrennial conference of the Historians of Netherlandish Art in Baltimore, November 2006. My thanks go to John Hand and Ron Spronk for reading drafts of this work en route to that presentation, and to the editors of this book, Sarah Blick and Laura Gelfand, for providing further help with the structure of this essay.

[1] Jochen Sander made this diptych a lynchpin in determining a chronology for Hugo's work; *Hugo van der Goes. Stilentwicklung und Chronologie*, Berliner Schriften zur Kunst 3 (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1992), pp. 45–90. Bernard Ridderbos interpreted differences between the two panels in style in light of Hugo's 1475 enrollment in the Rood Klooster and his involvement with the Modern Devotion; *De melancholie van de kunstenaar. Hugo van der Goes en de oudnederlandse schilderkunst* (The Hague: SDU Uitgeverij, 1991), pp. 159–69. Sander suggested that the *Fall of Man* was originally an independent panel, with the *Lamentation* and *St. Genevieve* added when it was expanded to a diptych; *Hugo van der Goes*, pp. 77–79. Ridderbos, on the other hand, posited that the *Fall* might originally have formed a diptych with a lost *Crucifixion* panel; *Melancholie*, pp. 163–64.

[2] Such differences, however, might just as well be indebted to iconography versus chronology and/or geography. Hugo seems to have turned to the opulent detail and coolly detached figures of Van Eyck for his newly burgeoning and verdant Eden; in the same manner he painted a starker Calvary peopled with more expressive Rogierian figures to underscore the emotional impact of this scene of mourning.

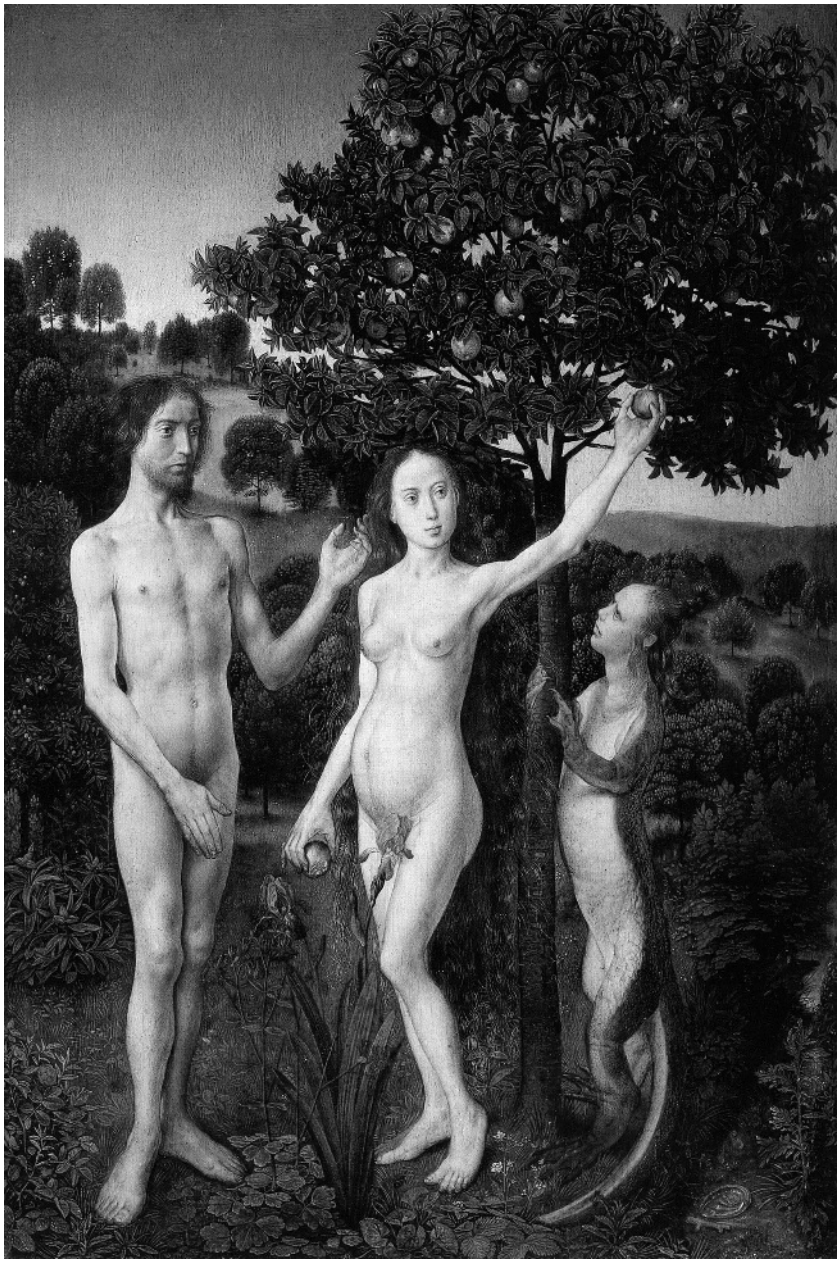

Fig. 12.1 Hugo van der Goes, *The Fall of Man*, *c*. 1470, oil on oak panel, 32.3 × 21.9 cm, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. Photo: after Elizabeth Dhanens, *Hugo van der Goes* (Antwerp: Mercatorfonds, 1998), p. 222.

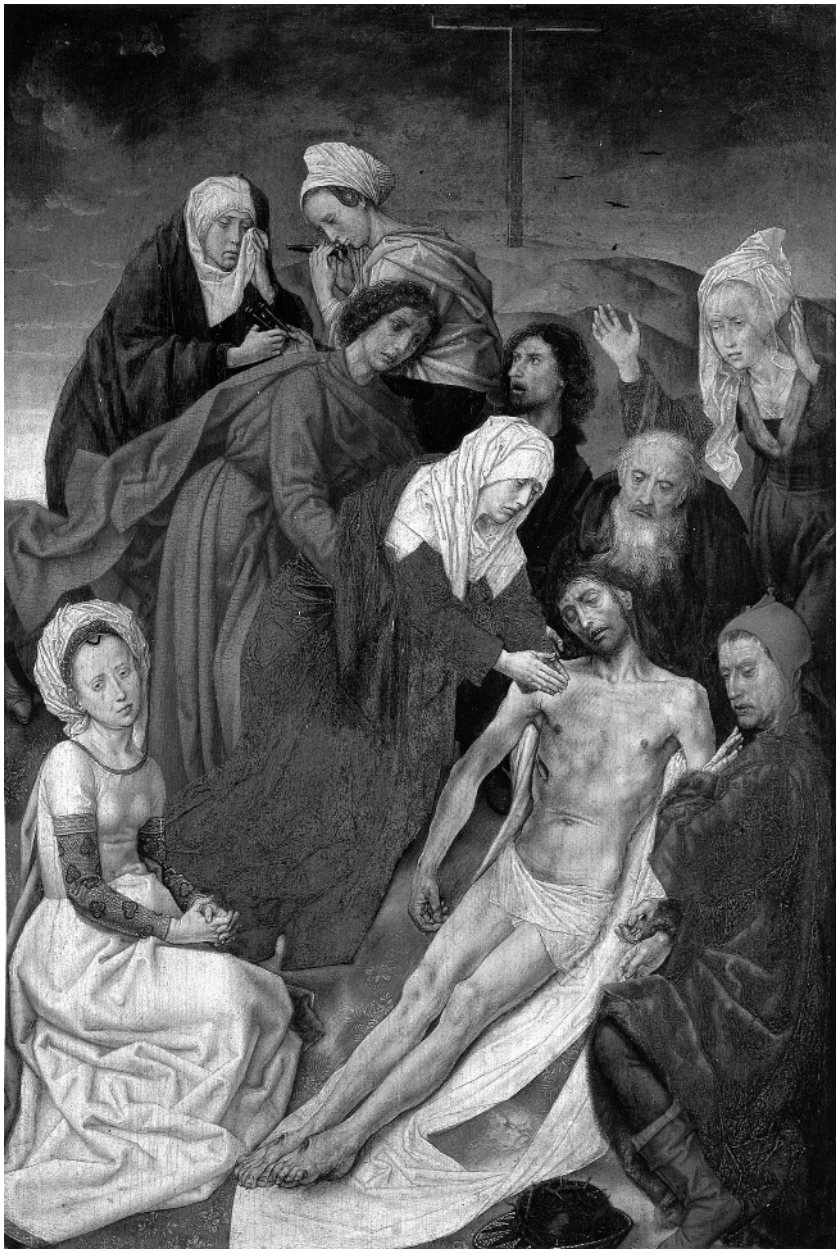

Fig. 12.2 Hugo van der Goes, *The Lamentation*, *c.* 1479, oil on oak panel, 34.4 × 22.8 cm, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. Photo: after Elizabeth Dhanens, *Hugo van der Goes* (Antwerp: Mercatorfonds, 1998), p. 223 (reversed).

that may have been felled at different times. Dendrochronological analysis suggests that the tree providing the panel for the *Fall* was felled between 1457 and 1463, while the one for the *Lamentation* was probably cut between 1463 and 1469, situating the program of the left panel between 1465 and 1473, and that of the right panel between 1471 and 1479.[3] This essay will be less concerned with particulars of chronology; rather it will focus on the compositional and iconographic means by which Hugo van der Goes united these two disparate themes upon completing the diptych. Earlier publications, some of which assumed a single program of work, suggested ways in which Hugo linked the left-hand *Fall* to the right-hand *Lamentation*.[4] I will focus on the right panel as well, and in particular on Hugo's use of Mary Magdalen, a figure who seems to form a distinct link between the two panels. In particular, I will turn to the analogous use of the Magdalen in late-medieval theater, where she appeared in a manner that is surprisingly consistent with the Vienna diptych, and where, as I hope to demonstrate, she enhanced viewers' interactions with Passion scenes in ways that enlighten our understanding of Hugo's paired panels.

Many have noted the degree to which Jan van Eyck's *Ghent Altarpiece* provided the example for Hugo's Adam and Eve; (figs. 12.3, 12.4) even Van Eyck's sculpted reliefs of Cain and Abel reappear, albeit in different compositions, in the spandrels above Hugo's *St. Genevieve* on the verso of the *Fall*. (fig. 12.5) But Ghent presented Hugo van der Goes with another tradition that seems to have exerted an equally strong influence, namely the frequent collaboration between artists and dramatists in that city. Indeed many members of Ghent's *rederijkerkamers* were artists by trade: the painter Claeys vander Meersch and the sculptor Cornelis Boone had been founding members of Ghent's first chamber of rhetoric, De Fonteine, in 1448, and Vander Meersch

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[3] Peter Klein, "Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych: Dendrochronological Analyses," in *Essays in Context: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych*, eds. John Hand and Ron Spronk (New Haven / London: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 220. Hand *et al.* also note that the underdrawing differs between the two panels, and that a third underdrawing style was used for the *St. Genevieve* panel, but explain that such differences can be a product of circumstance, such as the use of different models for the figures; Hand *et al.*, *Prayers and Portraits*, p. 314, n. 18.

[4] Herbert Kessler pointed to the purple bird in the lower right corner, which he identified as a phoenix, a symbol of the resurrection; "The Solitary Bird in Van Der Goes' *Garden of Eden*," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965), pp. 326–29. More recently, Hand *et al.* noted that the columbine in Hugo's Eden might be a symbol for the Passion of Christ; Hand *et al.*, *Prayers and Portraits*, p. 313, n. 2.

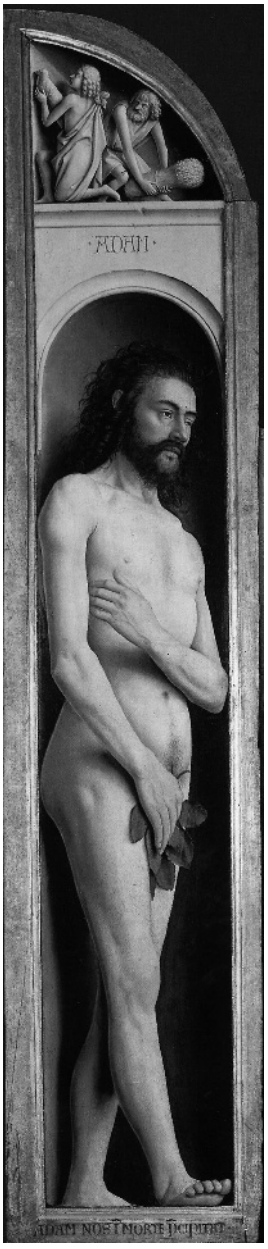

Fig. 12.3 Jan van Eyck, *Altarpiece of the Mystic Lamb*, detail: Adam, *c.* 1432, oil on oak panel, 204.3 × 33.2 cm, Ghent, Cathedraal Sint Bavo. Reproduction after Otto Pächt, *Van Eyck and the Founders of Early Netherlandish Painting* (London: Harvey Miller, 1994), pl. 25.

Fig. 12.4 Jan van Eyck, *Altarpiece of the Mystic Lamb*, detail: Eve, *c.* 1432, oil on oak panel, 204.3 × 33.2 cm, Ghent, Cathedraal Sint Bavo. Reproduction after Otto Pächt, *Van Eyck and the Founders of Early Netherlandish Painting* (London: Harvey Miller, 1994), pl. 26.

Fig. 12.5 Hugo van der Goes, *Saint Genevieve*, *c.* 1470, oil on oak panel, 32.3 × 21.9 cm, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. Photo: after Elizabeth Dhanens, *Hugo van der Goes* (Antwerp: Mercatorfonds, 1998), p. 233.

later became its dean in 1453. Other artists in De Fonteine included another sculptor, Daneel Croes (prince of the guild in 1483), a goldsmith, Ghiselbrecht Moeraert (member in 1452), and an architect, Joris Drabbe (member in 1459).[5]

Three more Ghent painters—Ghyselbrecht Blomme, Mathijs van Roden, and Jan vanden Hecke—helped found a second rhetoricians' guild in 1469, dedicated to St. Agnes. Of these three, only Blomme was an independent artist at the time, having matriculated into the painters' guild back in 1437; Vanden Hecke would join the painters in 1470, while Van Roden did not matriculate until 1475.[6] The 1484 ordinance book of Ghent's third *rederijkerkamer*, Maria ter Eeren, also lists many artists among its members at that time: the painters Adraain Seys, Andries van Male, and Gillis Ghijselins, the sculptor Cornelis de Smet, and the manuscript illuminator Jan van den Vallagate all appear as members in 1484.[7] Yet another Ghent artist, Saladin de Stoevere, led Oudenaarde's "rhetorical company" ("ghesellen vander retorike") when they performed at a shooting contest in Berchem in 1441.[8]

All three Ghent *rederijkerkamers* performed primarily religious plays in the fifteenth century, and each group seems to have formed prior to the official ratification of their statutes. Indeed theatrical troupes are often mentioned in Ghent documents prior to the ratification of the first *rederijkerkamer*'s statutes in 1448. A "ghesellen vanden esbattementen" ("group of the performance") staged a play or plays during Oudenaarde's annual Corpus Christi Procession in 1431;[9] this

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[5] Anne-Laure Van Bruaene, "Abel en eenighe const: Claeys vander Meersch, meester-schilder, en de jonghe Fonteine (1448–1476)," *Koninklijke souvereine hoofdkamer van retorica 'De Fonteine' te Gent. Jaarboek* 49–50 (1999–2000), p. 80.

[6] Els Cornelis, "De kunstenaar in het laat-middeleeuwse Gent. II. De sociaal-economische positie van de meesters van de Sint-Lucasgilde in de 15de eeuw," *Handelingen der maatschappij voor geschiedenis en oudheidkunde te Gent* n.r. 42 (1988), pp. 111, 123, 131–32.

[7] Van Bruaene, "Abel en eenighe const," pp. 77–94. See also Marc Beyaert, *Opkomst en bloei van de Gentse rederijkerskamer Marien Theeren* (Ghent: Provinciebestuur Oost-Vlaanderen, 1978), p. 28; and Cornelis, "Kunstenaar," pp. 121, 133–34.

[8] Van Bruaene, "Abel en eenighe const," p. 80; see also Bart A.M. Ramakers, *Spelen en figuren. Toneelkunst en processiecultuur in Oudenaarde tussen middeleeuwen en moderne tijd* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1996), pp. 109–10.

[9] D.J. van der Meersch, "Kronijk der rederijkkamers van Audenaerde," *Belgisch museum voor de Nederduitse tael- en letterkunde en de geschiedenis des Vaderlands* 6 (1842), p. 386. The 1431 Oudenaarde plays are probably those referred to in the archives of Aalst, when it introduced a new *Tree of Jesse* play "after the Trees in Ghent and Oudenaarde" ("ghemaect een Roode van Jesse naer de Roede van Ghend, en*de* van Oudenaerde") *Stadsrekeningen Aalst 1430–31* (Brussels, Archives Générales du Royaume, Chambre des Comptes [hereafter "AGRB Comptes"] 31431), f. 100r, item 3.

was probably the same "gesellen vanden esbattementen" that hosted a dramatic contest at home in Ghent in 1432 to celebrate the birth of Joos, the ill-fated son of Duke Philip the Good.[10] A "ghesellen van der conste" ("group of the art"), again perhaps the same group, performed plays in Ghent during a shooting contest hosted by the Guild of St. George in 1440; another "ghesellen van der conste" performed *esbatemente* in Antwerp in 1441, and a *Crowning with Thorns* play on Good Friday in Nieuwpoort in 1442. These "gesellen vanden esbattementen" and "ghesellen van der conste" were probably the kernel of what later became Ghent's first *rederijkerkamer*, De Fonteine.[11]

While such designations for performers were common in many cities, Anne-Laure van Bruaene has suggested that the term "conste" may further denote the participation of visual artists in Ghent's *rederijkerkamers*, and that De Fonteine perhaps grew from the group of artists that formed an official delegation to the annual procession in Tournai.[12] Every year from 1322 to 1487, Ghent's artists provided a costume and a tabernacle for Tournai's cult statue of the Virgin Mary as it was paraded through that city's streets. Such an activity would have brought all Ghent artists into close and regular contact with dramatists: a Tournai resolution from 1408 listed four different kinds of performance during its annual procession, from dramatic recitations by minstrels, to costumed marching characters, to mute tableaux vivants, to dramas performed by actors.[13] These experiences may have helped inspire artists from Ghent to help their own dramatic troupe, and it seems to be no coincidence that the two artists who were listed among the founders of De Fonteine in 1448, Claes van der Meersch and Cornelis Boone, had been leaders of this annual delegation of painters to Tournai. Indeed Van der Meersch was dean of the painters' guild, and thus leader of the Tournai delegation, the year that De Fonteine received its statutes.[14]

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[10] Philippe Blommaert, "Toneelgenootschappen te Gent," *Belgisch museum voor de Nederduitse tael- en letterkunde en de geschiedenis des Vaderlands* 10 (1846), p. 376.

[11] As suggested by Blommaert, "Toneelgenootschappen," p. 377, among others.

[12] Van Bruaene, "Abel en eenighe const," pp. 79–82.

[13] Jean Dumoulin, and Jacques Pycke, *La grande procession de Tournai (1090–1992). Une réalité religieuse, urbaine, diocésiane, sociale, économique et artistique* (Tournai/Louvain-la-Neuve: Institute d'Études Médievales de Université Catholique de Louvain, 1992), p. 66.

[14] Edmond de Busscher, *Recherches sur les peintres gantois, des XIV^e^ et XV^e^ siècles: indices primodiaux de l'emploi de la peinture à l'huile à Gand* (Ghent: L. Hebbelynck, 1859), p. 205; Cornelis, "Kunstenaar," pp. 112, 118. Such a connection between painters' guilds and early groups of rhetoricians has yet to be fully studied, but the

Of course the best known connection between artists and *rederijkers* in fifteenth-century Ghent came in 1458, when the city welcomed the triumphant Duke Philip the Good back to the city on April 23, and staged many tableaux vivants to greet him on various street corners. The most famous of these productions, and the centerpiece of the series, was a three-tiered stage erected in the square known as Den Poel, with living persons enacting a mute version of the interior of the *Ghent Altarpiece*.[15] This elaborate construction was certainly the work of the dramatists and painters in De Fonteine: the staged version enlarged the fountain of life relative to the rest of the stage, and its number of spouts was reduced to three, thus conforming to the *rederijkers*' coat of arms.

The day after Philip's entry, Ghent sponsored still more plays for a contest held before the *Stadhuis*. Groups of dramatists "from without or within, representing trade guilds or neighborhoods" were invited to perform plays not longer than 300 verses. Two groups were formally recognized *rederijkerkamers*: Ghent's De Fonteine and a second chamber of rhetoric dedicated to St. Barbara from nearby Sint Pieters; four other groups represented local neighborhoods—the Groenenbriel, the Vierwegscheede aen de Augustynen, the Ketelpoort, and the competition's winner, the Vrydagmarkt—while a seventh group was listed under the name of its leader, Jan de Cuelenare; he was also a painter, listed in the records of Ghent's guild from as early as 1408.[16]

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situation in Ghent was far from unique. Indeed the Antwerp painters' Guild of St. Luke officially united with one of the local *rederijkerkamers*, De Violeren, in 1480; this joint guild of artists and dramatists continued to function as one body into the sixteenth century; Jan Baptist van der Straelen, "Geschiedenis der rederijkkamer 'De Violieren' of 'Violettebloem' onder zinspreuk 'Wt jonsten versaemt' te Antwerpen," *Het Taelverbond. Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis, tael-, oudheid- en letterkunde* 8 (1853), pp. 213–322.

[15] The event is recorded in a fifteenth-century accound, see C.P. Serrure and Philippe Blommaert, eds., *Kronyk van Vlaenderen van 580 tot 1467*, 2 vols. (Ghent: Vanderhaeghen-Hulin, 1839–40), 2, pp. 233ff. It has since been reprinted many times, for example, Elizabeth Dhanens, *Het retabel van het Lam Gods in de Sint-Baafskathedraal te Gent*, Inventaris van het kunstpatrimonium van Oostvlaanderen VI (Ghent: Bestende Deputatie van de Provinciale Raad van Oostvlaanderen, 1965), pp. 96–99.

[16] The archival notice is transcribed in Blommaert, "Toneelgenootschappen," p. 383, and elsewhere. While Hugo was probably not on hand to witness this event (he only matriculated in the painters' guild in 1467, and thus was probably just born around the time of Philip's entry), he would certainly have been aware of it, as one of the more important events from Ghent's recent history. Indeed Dhanens suggested that he based his *Meeting of Jacob and Rachel* upon descriptions of the earlier staged *Marriage of*

Hugo van der Goes matriculated in the Ghent painters' guild in 1467, and there he would have entered this milieu, where artists were regularly and closely interacting with dramatists. Hugo himself was documented as part of the delegation of Ghent painters to Tournai's dramatized procession in 1467.[17] He worked alongside the St. Agnes *rederijker* Ghiselbrecht Blomme in 1468, making decorations for the joyous entry of Margaret of York into Ghent on May 20, and for the entry of Charles the Bold on May 31.[18] Hugo also helped fashion decorations and/or plays for the couple's wedding in Bruges in July of that year,[19] and he worked alongside Ghent dramatists again in 1472, providing decorations for another joyous entry of Charles the Bold, during which the three local *rederijkerkamers* performed in a competition organized by the city.[20]

Such collaborations between painters and dramatists in Ghent provides the background for a fuller discussion of theatrical motifs in paintings by Hugo van der Goes. Before proceeding, however, I must

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David and Abigail in the 1458 entry; Elizabeth Dhanens, "De geschiedenis van David en Abigaïl en de ontmoeting van Jacob en Rachel door Hugo van der Goes," *Actum Gandavi. Zeven bijdragen in verband met de oude kunst te Gent, Academiae Analecta. Mededelingen van de koninklijke academie voor wetenschappen, letteren en schone kunsten van België. Klasse der schone kunsten* 48/2 (1987), pp. 18–30.

[17] The document, from the Tournai Municipal Archives, is reprinted in Robert Hoozee, *L'Imaginaire Museum Hugo van der Goes* (Ghent: Museum voor Schone Kunsten, 1982), p. 62, document 5. Hugo may well have gone to Tournai on other occasions: the archives only record the leader of each year's group.

[18] Hugo provided painted figures that were attached to bolts of fabric hung along the route, while Blomme probably worked on the *tableaux vivants* that were also staged there. The city also offered a prize for the best entrance of a dramatic guild on the Leie. A.G.B. Schayes, ed., *Dagboek der Gentsche collatie, bevattende een nauwkeurig verhael van de gebeurtenissen van Gent, en elders in Vlaenderen voorgevallen van de jaren 1446 tot 1515*, 4 vols. (Ghent: Hebbelynck, 1842), 2, pp. 222–223; see also Peter Arnade, "Secular Charisma, Sacred Power: Rites of Rebellion in the Ghent Entry of 1467," *Handelingen der maatschappij van geschiedenis en oudheidkunde te Gent* n.r. 45 (1991), pp. 92–93.

[19] Just about every artist participated in the decorations for the 1468 festival. Hugo was just part of the Ghent delegation, and they joined groups of artists from throughout the realm, all under the supervision of Jacques Daret. The court of Burgundy set up a special account to pay these many artists, the "Comptes de Fastré Holet;" it is reprinted in Amable-Guillaume-Prosper Brugière de Barante, *Histoire des ducs de Bourgogne de la Maison de Valois*, ed. Baron Frédéric Auguste Ferdinand de Reiffenberg, 10 vols. (Brussels: M. Lacrosse, 1835–36), 10, pp. 239–54.

[20] De Busscher, "Peintres Gantois," pp. 205–206. In addition to Hugo's personal involvement in theatrical productions, his landlords from the early 1470s, the Van den Zickele family, had been patrons of the sculptor and *rederijker* Cornelis Boone; see Dhanens, *Hugo van der Goes*, pp. 39–41.

address the difficulty rendered by the fact that few Netherlandish mystery play texts survive from the fifteenth century, with even fewer extant texts of Biblical plays. Indeed only four vernacular Biblical plays remain from prior to the sixteenth century in the Low Countries: a fourteenth-century *Passion* from Maastricht, the *Eerste Bliscap* and *Sevenste Bliscap* (the *First* and *Seventh Joy of Mary*) from mid-fifteenth century Brussels (both fragments), a fifteenth-century *Antichrist*, and a later-fifteenth century *Abraham and Sarah*, also a fragment.[21] The opposite side of this coin, however, is the astounding number of recorded performances in nearly every town and city in the region. Biblical dramas were at least an annual occurrence in most cities, and they were performed with even greater frequency in many locations.[22] What is known about these performances suggests that Netherlandish dramas often reflected those from neighboring regions, both in stagecraft and in content. Scenes from the Brussels *Seven Joys of the Virgin*, for example, have been shown to bear similarities to plays from Germany, France, and England, perhaps filtered through earlier Netherlandish dramas.[23] Religious theater during the fifteenth century seems became an international phenomenon, with texts often drawn from a common set of sources, whether earlier biblical dramas or popular devotional literature.[24] Once written, characters and scenes traveled freely

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[21] The sixteenth century and early seventeenth centuries preserved many more play texts, somewhere in the vicinity of six hundred. But less than a sixth of them were Biblical plays. W.M.H. Hummelen, "The Biblical Plays of the Rhetoricians and the Pageants of Oudenaarde and Lille," in *Modern Dutch Studies: Essays in Honor of Peter King, Professor of Modern Dutch Studies at the University of Hull, on the Occasion of His Retirement*, eds. M. Wintle and P. Vincent, trans. S. Mellor, (London / Atlantic Highlands NJ: Athlone Press, 1988), p. 88, 95ff.

[22] Leo van Puyvelde claimed to have compiled more than 2000 records of plays; *Schilderkunst en toneelvertooning op het einde van de Middeleeuwen: een bijdrage tot de kunstgeschiedenis van de Nederlanden* (Ghent: A. Siffer, 1912), p. 62.

[23] Sections of the Brussels *Bliscapen* have been traced to the fourteenth-century Maastricht *Paaschspel*; J.A. Worp, *Geschiedenis van het drama en van het tooneel in Nederland*, 2 vols. (Rotterdam: Langerveld, 1904–08), 1, p. 65; and Leo van Puyvelde, *De geestelijke spelen in de middeleeuwen*, Verhandelingen van de algemeene katholieke Vlaamsche hoogeschoooluitbreiding 170 (Antwerp: Kiliaan, 1913), p. 22ff. Other scholars have linked the Maastricht Passion to contemporary plays from France, Germany, and England; Helmut de Boor, "Das holländische Osterspiel,"*Acta germanica* 3 (1968), pp. 54–60.

[24] Clifford Davidson suggested that the similarity of theater practices in the Low Countries and England might be traced to shared devotional practices in both regions; "Northern Spirituality and Late Medieval Drama of York," in *Spirituality of Western Christendom* ed. E. Rozanne Elder (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1976), pp. 125–51. This same idea was also echoed by Pamela Sheingorn, "On Using Medieval

from country to country, paying little heed to geographic or linguistic barriers.[25]

Dramas in the Low Countries took many forms, from spoken dialogue on fixed stages before a stationary audience, used during *rederijker* contests and incidental performances, to mute actors on fixed stages mounted before mobile audiences, used most often for joyous entry dramas. However, it was a third type that was most often used in the region: dramatized carts moving in a procession before fixed audiences, usually accompanied by a locally revered relic or cult statue. This technique closely mirrors the practice in England, usually performed on the Feast of Corpus Christi; that similar processional plays began to spread through Flanders and Brabant in the last decades of the fourteenth century, concurrent with the birth of these same plays in English cities like York, further suggests that there may have been even greater similarity in the plays of these two regions.[26] Thus the dearth of particularly Netherlandish material presents no great barrier; those texts can justifiably be augmented by looking to dramatic material from neighboring regions, particularly from England, whose theatrical history most closely parallels that of the Low Countries.[27]

Art in the Study of Medieval Drama: An Introduction to Methodology," *Research Opportunities in Renaissance Drama* 22 (1979), p. 105.

[25] Stephen Wright notes that the *Vengeance Notre Seigneur*, which first appeared in the fourteenth century, was performed in six different languages, and that performances of the Passion were even more widespread; Wright, *The Vengeance of Our Lord: Medieval Dramatizations of the Destruction of Jerusalem* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1989), p. 1. Grace Frank's study of medieval French theater makes clear how widely influential were the French Passion plays of Arnoul Gréban, Eustace Mercadé, and Jean Michel, with numerous other texts borrowing heavily from these more famous texts; *The Medieval French Drama* (Oxford: Calendon, 1954). Indeed Biblical plays in French were also produced in the Low Countries; see Gustave Cohen, *Le théâtre français en Belgique au moyen âge* (Brussels: La Renaissance du Livre [1953]), and Frederic J. Faber, *Histoire du théâtre français en Belgique depuis son origine jusqu'à nos jours, d'apres des documents inédits reposant aux archives générales du royaume*, 5 vols. (Brussels: Olivier, 1878–80).

[26] The first vernacular plays in England appeared in York in 1376, Beverly in 1377, and Coventry in 1392; see Wright, *Vengeance*, 15. This parallels the situation in the Netherlands, where processions were first dramatized in Dendermonde in 1377, in Ypres in 1383, Oudenburg in 1384, Kortrijk in 1391, Leuven in 1395, Bruges in 1396, Antwerp in 1398, Deinze in 1400, Veurne in 1403, Oudenaarde and Tournai in 1408, Nieuwpoort before 1411, and this is just a preliminary list. On the coincident rise of Netherlandish processional plays throughout the Low Countries around 1400, see my article, "Processional Plays in Aalst. A View from the Archives," *Medievalia* 28.1 (2007), p. 96.

[27] The surviving French texts are for plays that were often staged in a very different way, elaborate epics on multi-part fixed stages, and extending over many days.

Some scholars have already discussed theatrical motifs in Hugo's Vienna diptych. In the left wing, the artist included a human-headed serpent, which Robert Koch suggested was consistent with its appearance in late-medieval dramas.[28] While Koch cited no specific texts, a casual review of the appearance of serpents on late-medieval stages confirms his hypothesis. In the English N-Town plays (also known as the *Ludus Coventriae* cycle) the snake is called "a werm with an aungelys face,"[29] while stage directions in the Drapers' guild's production of the *Fall of Man* from Chester called for an serpent's body with feet, and the face of a maiden.[30]

Hugo van der Goes would have had ample opportunity to witness various dramatizations of Adam and Eve. The *Fall of Man* was staged as part of many annual processions in the Low Countries, such as those mounted in Antwerp and Leuven.[31] Even closer to home, Aalst's Procession of Sts. Peter and Paul contained a *Fall of Man* every year from at least 1444.[32] Ghent regularly sent officials to that nearby production, and its *rederijkers* even performed in Aalst's procession on many occasions.[33] The connection between Ghent and Aalst's produc-

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Such was the case for the famous plays by Arnoul Gréban, Jean Michel, and Eustace Mercadé.

[28] Robert A. Koch, "The Salamander in Van der Goes' Garden of Eden," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 28 (1965), pp. 323–326. For more on the connection between Hugo's painting and dramatized serpents, see John Kester Bonnell, "The Serpent with a Human Head in Art and Mystery Play," *American Journal of Archaeology* 21 (1917), pp. 255–91.

[29] Line 220. Stephen Spector, ed., *The N-Town Play: Cotton Ms. Vespasian D.8* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 30. After God's curse, the stage directions refer to this character as "Diabolus" versus "Serpent," suggesting perhaps that the costumed actor changed masks.

[30] After line 208. David Mills, ed., *The Chester Mystery Cycle. A New Edition with Modernized Spelling* (East Lansing/Woodbridge, UK: Boydell and Brewer, 1992), p. 33.

[31] Leuven's *Fall of Man* was among the first dramatized carts that debuted in its procession in 1401; Edward van Even, *L'Omgang de Louvain. Dissertation historique et archéologique sur ce célèbre cortége communal* (Brussels / Leuven: Fonteyn, 1863), p. 26. On Antwerp's *Fall of Man*, also dating to the early fifteenth century, see Leo de Burbure, *De Antwerpsche ommegangen in de XIV^e^ en XV^e^ eeuw, naar gelijktijdige handschriften* (Antwerp: P. Kockx, 1878), and F. Prims, "Het oudste tooneel te Antwerpen," *Verslagen en mededelingen der Koninklijke Vlaamsche Academie voor Taal- en Letterkunde* (1933), pp. 865–72.

[32] *Stadsrekeningen Aalst 1443–44* (AGRB Comptes, 31438), fol. 92r, item 5. For a list of other *Fall of Man* plays throughout Europe and in England, see Bonnell, "Serpent," pp. 281–88.

[33] In 1445 the bailiff of Ghent came to Aalst with eight young persons to perform a play in the evening following the annual procession; *Stadsrekeningen Aalst 1444–45*

tion extended even further than that. In 1430 the painter charged to "remake and improve [the props] to the best of his ability" on a nine-year contract was given that responsibility "following the advice of Ghent's receiver-general," which may have led Aalst's dramatists to model their plays after versions being staged in Ghent the next year.[34] Theatrical connections between these two cities continued in Hugo's day: between 1466 and 1470 Ghent's painters rented costumes and props to Aalst annually for its procession, and in 1468 and 1469 the Ghent painter Mathijs van Roden (one of the founding members of the city's second *rederijkerkamer*, Saint Agnes in 1469) supplied Aalst with costumes for its Jewish characters.[35] Around this same time, Hugo contributed to decorations for another event that included a dramatized Adam and Eve: the first couple were found on the first stage that welcomed Charles the Bold and Margaret of York into Bruges in 1468, mounted on the corner of the *Kersenboomstraat*. This stage took the form of a temporary arch, under which Charles and Margaret rode. As described by a contemporary eyewitness,

> over the street was built a rich gate under and through which they were led. And on this gate stood a tower, in which stood a beautiful, merry stage, decorated as the Earthly Paradise, in which Adam and Eve were enacted by living persons. And on the front was written *Dominus deus in paradiso voluptatis adduxit evam et adam ut uxoi et coniunx ipsius*

(AGRB Comptes, 31439), fol. 74r, item 3. D'Hondt transcribes a document from 1461 that records a payment to six *rederijkers* from Ghent who "performed various plays on wagons" ("speelden op waghene diverssche spelen ende esbattementen") in Aalst in 1461, albeit in December; Valery d'Hondt, *Geschiedenis van het toneel te Aalst en bijzonderlijk van de koninklijke rederijkkamer 'De Catharijnisten' onder kensprek 'aMor VInCIt'* (Aalst: P. van Schuylenbergh-Luca, 1908), 25–26. A "ghezellen vander Rethoriquen van Ghend" returned in 1472, this time performing in the procession; *Stadsrekeningen Aalst 1471–72* (AGRB Comptes, 31466), fol. 80r, items 5–6.

[34] "bi advise vande*n* ontfanghere tGheend": *Stadsrekeningen Aalst 1429–30* (AGRB Comptes, 31430), fol. 130r, item 4. In 1431 Aalst's city registrar specified that the city's new *Tree of Jesse* was "made after the Tree in Ghent, and in Oudenaarde, and the master carpenter…and smith were sent there, where they saw the other versions" ("es tAelst ghemaect een Roode van Jesse naer de Roede van Ghend, en*de* van Oudenaerde daer ghezonde*n* waren meeste*r* Diedric van Blidenberch te*m*merman, en*de* Michiel Steelin, smet, dies met vroet en ware*n* zij en hadden dande*r* ghezien"): *Stadsrekeningen Aalst 1430–31* (AGRB Comptes, 31431), fol. 100r, item 3; fol. 100v, item 1; and fol. 101r, items 1 and 2. For more on the relationship of Aalst's plays to those of other Low Countries cities, see my article, "Processional Plays in Aalst."

[35] *Stadsrekeningen Aalst 1465–66* (AGRB Comptes, 31460), fol. 75r, item 2; *1467–68* (AGRB Comptes, 31462), fol. 83v, item 4, fol. 84r, item 1; *1468–69* (AGRB Comptes, 31463), fol. 59v, items 5–6, fol. 60r, item 1; and *1469–70* (AGRB Comptes, 31464), fol. 58r, items 5 and 6.

> *esset*. And Adam had a scroll in his hand, reading *Hoc nunc os, ex ossibus meis, et caro de carne mea*. And our Lord had a scoll, reading *Crescite et multiplicamini et replete terram*.[36]

As the description notes, this production had no serpent, focusing instead on the marriage of Adam and Eve. However the *Fall of Man*, complete with a serpent, did appear on a stage in Brussels around this same time, where it formed an introduction to the *Eerste Bliscap*. This play was performed as part of a recurring cycle, and would have been mounted once every seven years from at least 1441; as such, Brussels' *Fall of Man* would have been performed in 1469, close to the date often ascribed to our panel, and again in 1476.[37]

There were, therefore, a great number of dramatized Gardens of Eden around 1470 with which Hugo might have been familiar. Another theatrical detail in his Vienna panel is the particularly sensual nature of his figures.[38] Hugo brings heightened focus on how the serpent has used the allure of Eve's beauty to tempt Adam. His Eve holds one apple from which she has already eaten while she stretches to pick another, exposing her lithe and lovely body to full view. As Adam himself reaches toward the hanging fruit, his fingers almost lace into

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[36] "Eerst aen den hove va[n]der kerseboom strate tot den .IIJ. muenicke[n]dweers over die strate was ghetemmert eene rijkelijcke poorte daer men onder duere leedt. En[de] up dese poorte stont eene[n] torre, daer inne dat stont een schoon lustich parck, gheconterfeyt naer teerdtsche paradijs, daer in ghetoocht was van levende personen Adam en[de] Eva. En[de] daer voren stont ghescreven. D[omin]us de[um] in paradiso voluptatis adduxit evam et adam ut uxoi et coniunx ipsius esset. En[de] Adam dye hadde een rolle in dye hant leggende aldus. Hoc nunc os, ex ossibus meis, et caro de carne mea. Ende onse here hadte een rolle. leggende aldus. Crescite et multiplicamini et replete terram": *Dits die excellente cronike van vlaenderen beghinnende van Liederick Buc den eersten forestier tot den laetsten, die door haer vrome feyte, namaels Graven van Vlaendren ghemaect worden, actervolghende die rechte afcomste der voorseiden graven, tot desen onsen door luchtichste hooch gheboren Keyser Karolo, altijt vermeederde des rijcx gheboren te Ghendt* (Antwerp: Vorsterman, 1531), fol. 137r. This account was later used by Nicolas Despars for his account of the 1468 marriage; *Cronijcke van den lande ende graefscepe van Vlaenderen, van de jaeren 405 tot 1492*, ed. J. de Jonghe, 4 vols. (Bruges: W. Messchert, 1839–40), pp. 4, 25.

[37] A prologue to the text of the *First Joy* notes that the text was for a performance of 1448, however it makes reference to the marriage of Prince Charolais (the future Charles the Bold), suggesting a date of 1441. On the date of the first performance of the Brussels plays, see W.H. Beuken, ed., *Die Eerste Bliscap van Maria en Die Sevenste Bliscap van Onser Vrouwen* (Culemborg: Tjeenk Willink/Noorduijn, 1973), pp. 14–18.

[38] Hand *et al*., justly called them "two of the most attractive nudes in early Netherlandish painting": *Prayers and Portraits*, p. 94.

Eve's uncommonly long and silken hair. In the medieval dramatic tradition, Eve often relied upon her sensuality as her means to seduce Adam into disobedience. For example, the serpent in the N-Town *Fall of Man* praises Eve's beauty, calling her "fayr wyff and comely dame,"[39] whereas in the Coopers' *Fall of Man* from York the Serpent tells Eve she should be worshipped because she is beautiful.[40] In a play from Norwich composed before 1533, Eve is addressed as "gemme of felycyte and femynyne love," and she later entreats Adam to "Eate therof for thy pleasure."[41] In a second Norwich *Fall of Man*, from 1565, Eve begins to tempt Adam by calling him her "lovely lover."[42] Such playfully erotic allusions can be found as far back as the twelfth-century French *Jeu d'Adam*, where Satan suggests that Eve should disobey Adam because he does not recognize her beauty.[43] Hugo seems to have been aware of such traditions, and made reference to them by painting Adam's fingers as if caressing Eve's luxurious hair at the moment he reaches for the apple.[44]

In most medieval dramatic cycles, the *Fall of Man* provided an introduction to other dramas presenting the life of Christ, and formed a context in which to understand the Passion.[45] Therefore these plays often concluded with lengthy lamentations from Adam and Eve, which Clifford Davidson noted help stress their transition from hope to despair.[46] Hugo seems to have implied such a cycle of change when he added the second panel to his diptych, so that the actions of Adam and Eve lead directly to mankind's lament. In order to make this transition

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[39] Lines 87–88. Spector, *N-Town Play*, p. 26.

[40] Lines 54–55. Richard Beadle, ed. *The York Plays* (London: Edward Arnold, 1982), p. 66.

[41] Lines 55, 77. John Matthews Manly, ed., *Specimens of the Pre-Shakespearean Drama, with an Introduction, Notes, and a Glossary*, 2 vols. (Boston / London: Ginn and Co., 1987), 1, p. 3.

[42] Line 61. Manly, *Specimens*, 1, p. 8.

[43] Line 238. Edward Noble Stone, trans., "Adam, a Religious Play of the Twelfth Century Translated from the Norman French and Latin into English Verse," *University of Washington Publications in Language and Literature* 6 (1926), p. 167.

[44] While the *Eerste Bliscap* makes no reference to Eve's beauty, when Adam eats the apple he says, "I will not belabor myself to deny your desire" (lines 254–55): Beuken, *Bliscap*, p. 65.

[45] Lynette Muir, "The Fall of Man in the Drama of Medieval Europe," *Studies in Medieval Culture* 10 (1977), pp. 121–131.

[46] Clifford Davidson, *From Creation to Doom: The York Cycle of Mystery Plays* (New York: AMS Press, 1984), pp. 40–43.

more clear, Hugo created certain visual parallels. Some have noted, for example, that the figure of Adam is reflected in the prone body of Christ, based upon the common medieval typology that Christ was the new Adam.[47] But whereas standard theology had the Virgin Mary as the new Eve, in Hugo's diptych a closer parallel to Eve is found in the figure of Mary Magdalen, whose salvation is realized through a denial of her sensuality. Indeed Hugo placed his Magdalen in closest proximity to the left panel, as something of a bridge between the first couple and the rest of Christ's mourners. Furthermore, he seems to have repeated the features of Eve on Mary Magdalen's face, suggesting an even closer link between these figures.[48]

Hugo most likely painted his *Lamentation* after he had moved to the vicinity of Brussels, deriving many of his figures from works by Rogier van der Weyden and his circle. Indeed Hugo's Magdalen parallels many Rogierian panels, but her her white costume and her isolation deep in the corner of the composition correspond most closely with a *Lamentation* in The Hague.[49] (fig. 12.6) Unlike any of Rogier's compositions, however, Hugo's Magdalen looks directly toward the viewer, a pose that more closely mirrors a work by another Brabantine artist, Dirk Bouts's Louvre *Lamentation*, (fig. 12.7) whose Magdalen also seems to share the features of Hugo's figure.[50]

While Brabantine artists provided formal prototypes for Hugo's Magdalen, the way in which the artist situated her is again consistent

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[47] Ridderbos, *Melacholie*, p. 163.

[48] Ridderbos also noticed this similarity of the features of these two figures; *Melacholie*, p. 163.

[49] The Magdalen wears white in Rogier's Uffizi *Entombment*, and a *Deposition* by the Catherine Master in Munich. White-robed Magdalens also appear in Dirk Bouts' *Entombment* (London, National Gallery) and Petrus Christus's *Lamentation* (Brussels, Musée Royale des Beaux-Arts), both of which owe debt to Rogier's compositions. The Magdalen also appears in the same corner in a Rogierian work once owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, and later sold by Christies (June 18, 1982, lot 43). She is in the opposite corner of the Abegg *Crucifixion* (Riggisberg), where she turns toward Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea in the right panel. She also turns away from the cross in Christus's Brussels *Lamentation*, suggesting, perhaps, an original left panel for the wide work.

[50] Of course Hugo had become quite familiar with Bouts's work after moving to the Rood Klooster: in 1479 he was summoned by the city of Leuven to judge the merits of unfinished works by Bouts, and would also provide a donor panel for the *St. Hippolyte* triptych (Bruges, Sint Salvator).

Fig. 12.6 Rogier van der Weyden (and studio), *The Lamentation of Christ*, *c.* 1460–64, oil on oak panel, 80.6 × 130.1 cm, The Hague, Royal Picture Gallery Mauritshuis. Photo: Friends of the Mauritshuis, The Hague; used by permission.

Fig. 12.7 Dirk Bouts, *The Lamentation*, *c*. 1460, oil on oak panel, 69 × 49 cm, Paris, Musée du Louvre. Reproduction after Maurits Smeyers, *Dirk Bouts, Schilder van de Stilte* (Leuven: Davidsfonds, 1998), p. 98.

with her role in medieval theater.[51] The Magdalen figured in many such dramas, but perhaps nowhere more prominently than in four English plays preserved in a late fifteenth-century manuscript in Digby. Two of these plays focus specifically upon her life and conversion, but she plays an equally important role in a *Burial of Christ* and *Resurrection of Christ* from that same manuscript. The Digby plays give the most elaborate surviving dramatization of the life of the Magdalen and make an excellent touchstone for discussing the role of the Magdalen in medieval theater.[52]

On stage the Magdalen was often isolated from other characters; she was usually alone on stage when she delivered her laments, expressing her sorrow directly to the audience, and this occurs in other situations. The Digby *Resurrection* opens with the Magdalen reciting a seventy-line lament while alone on stage.[53] Such soliloquies were not unique to that play: the N-Town *Appearance to Mary Magdalene* also begins with her alone on stage, as does the York Winedrawers' *Christ's Appearance to Mary Magdalene*, while in the Carpenters' *Resurrection* from York she is abandoned on stage by the other Marys.[54] In these dramatized lamentations the Magdalen acts as a witness, recounting what she has

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[51] On theatrical Magdalens in general, see Meg Twycross, "Books for the Unlearned," in *Drama and Religion*, ed. John Redmond, Themes in Drama 5 (Cambridge / New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 78; and Peter Parshall, "Lucas van Leyden's Narrative Style," *Nederlands kunsthistorisch jaarboek* 29 (1978), p. 225. On her appearance in the plays by Gréban (before 1452) and Michel (1486, and based in part on Gréban), both of which were also performed in the Netherlands, see also Edelgard Dubruck, "Changes of Taste and Audience Expectation in Fifteenth-Century Drama," *Fifteenth-Century Studies* 6 (1983), p. 71. There was also a procession in Utrecht on the Feast Day of Mary Magdalen, which may well have included Magdalen plays; see Willem Moll, *Kerkgeschiedenis van Nederland voor de Hervorming*, 5 vols. (Utrecht: Kemink en Zoon, 1864–69), 2, pp. 168–69, 217.

[52] Ms. 133, c. 1480–90; see F. J. Furnivall, ed., *The Digby Plays, with an Incomplete 'Morality' of the Wisdom Who Is Christ* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967). The first play details her inheritance of the Castle at Magdala from her father Cyrus, her temptation and life of sin, and her repentance followed by her life with Christ and his followers, up to the resurrection of her brother Lazarus. Her second play begins with her dialogue with the risen Christ at his tomb, where he sends her as a witness to the apostles. It continues with her mission to Marseilles, also commanded by Christ, where she converts the king and queen by working miracles, and ends with her life as a hermit in the desert, her death, and her ascent into Heaven. Although the *Burial* and *Resurrection* plays fit nicely between the two Magdalen plays, the four plays do not seem to have been designed as a suite, since there is overlap in their contents, particularly with the *Noli me tangere* scene.

[53] Lines 867–935. Furnivall *Digby Plays*, p. 201.

[54] Lines 1–8. Spector, *N-Town Play*, pp. 365–366; lines 1–21, 267–87. Beadle, *York Plays*, pp. 351, 356.

seen to other characters and to the audience. She becomes a mediator of experience, a surrogate who exhorts others to see what she has seen, to feel what she feels.

Mary Magdalen's act of viewing Christ's body had long been emphasized in medieval dramas, and even in the earliest plays, such as the tenth-century Latin liturgical productions, the Apostles ask the Magdalen, "Tell us Mary, what did you see on the way?"[55] This scene translated into nearly every later production, and seems to have influenced the Magdalen's actions in various contexts, where she often informs others of what she had seen. In the N-Town/Ludus Coventriae plays, she was present in the Garden of Gethsemane and informs the Virgin that Christ has been arrested. In Arnoul Greban's fifteenth-century *Passion* cycle, an angel tells the three Marys that Pilate has condemned Christ, but the Magdalen alone delivers that news to the Virgin, while in another French play from Semur, the Magdalen informs the Virgin of the Flagellation.[56] In some plays Mary Magdalen even stepped out of character, commenting on herself and her figurative significance, and exhorting the audience to follow her example.[57]

Her greatest role as a mediating witness, however, would come at Calvary. In the Digby *Burial of Christ* Mary Magdalen focuses the attention of others on the battered body of Christ. She begins by imploring Joseph of Arimathea to "Approach to us near;/Behold him wounded with spear,/Who loved you so well."[58] In their ensuing dialogue, nearly 300 lines of it, the Magdalen continues to implore the Arimathean to look upon Christ's painful wounds:

> Good Joseph, come near and behold!
> This bloody lamb's body is stark and cold.
> You would have been truly sorry.
> Joseph! Look better, behold and see,
> In how little space how many wounds there be!
> Here was no mercy, here was no pity,

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[55] Susan Haskins, *Mary Magdalen: Myth and Metaphor* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1995), pp. 207–208, 216.

[56] Sr. Mary Chauvin, "The Role of Mary Magdalene in Medieval Drama" (PhD diss., The Catholic University of America, 1951), pp. 97–99; and Katie Normington, *Gender and Medieval Drama* (Woodbridge/Rochester: Brewer, 2004), p. 115.

[57] Jörg O. Fichte, *Expository Voices in Medieval Drama: Essays on the Mode and Function of Dramatic Exposition*, Erlanger Beiträge zur Sprach- und Kunstwissenschaft 55 (Nuremberg: Carl, 1975), pp. 93–94.

[58] Lines 73–79. Furnivall, *Digby Plays*, p. 174.

But cruel dealings painfully.
Oh good Joseph, I am all dismayed
To see his tender flesh thus ruefully arrayed,
In this way so woefully displayed,
Wounded with nail and spear!
Oh dear Joseph, I feel my heart wax cold,
These blessed feet thus bloody to behold,
Which I washed with tears many-fold,
And wiped with my hair.
Oh how rueful a spectacle it is!
Never has been seen, nor shall be after this,
Such cruel rigor to the king of bliss;
The lord that made all,
Thus to suffer in his humanity,
And that only for our iniquity!
Oh maker of man! What love and pity
Had thou for us so strong!
Oh good Joseph, were you not present here?[59]

Joseph replied that indeed he was present, yet still the Magdalen still continues to explain what took place, her words certainly intended to arouse viewers' pity and piety,

Oh Joseph, if I told you every circumstance
…
How he suffered to be taked,
Sore, scourged and naked
On all his body slender!
And not withstanding your manly heart,
From your eyes the tears would start,
To show your heaviness.
Come here, Joseph and stand near this rood!
…
your-self behold & see!
His pain passes all others;
All if he were the prince of peace,
Therfore my sorrow haves no releace.[60]

Then in a fascinating later exchange, the Magdalen again invites Joseph to look upon the body of Christ, comparing His wounds to ink on a page,

[59] Lines 85–109. Furnivall, *Digby Plays*, pp. 174–75.
[60] Lines 113; 118–128; 133–36. Furnivall, *Digby Plays*, pp. 175–76.

Come here Joseph, behold and look
How many bloody letters have been written in this book,
And how small are the margins here.
Joseph
Yes, this parchment is stretched out of size.
Oh dearest lord! in such a painful way
Have you endured this![61]

The Magdalen again continues, as much to the audience, it seems, as to anyone on stage,

Who saw ever a spectacle more piteous,
A more lamentable sight, and & dolorous?
Ah! this woeful day!
Release this sorrow that I endure
With great inward heaviness, and cure!
Release, that I do not die,
To see him dead, made me of nought,
And with his death has thus me bought;
Oh cruel tormentery!
Oh dear master, be not displeased:
If I might die with you, my heart would be well eased;
Oh! faint and faint it is.[62]

Despite Joseph's repeated attempts to console her, Mary Magdalen continued to recount the events she had witnessed at the Crucifixion, imploring everyone to look upon the body of Christ,

Behold these blood welts, her may thou fetch
Balm more precious than gold!
Oh you welts of mercy, digged so deep,
Who may refrain, who may but weep,
These bloody streams to behold?[63]

In the course of this drama, the Magdalen also tells the other Marys about Christ's body, how the feet she once kissed and wiped with her hair have now been pierced by nails.[64] Mary Magdalen continues to serve as a witness in the Digby *Resurrection*: on reaching the tomb of Christ, she bids the other two Marys, "Com nerr sisters, & see!" not yet realizing that the tomb is empty.[65]

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[61] Lines 271–276. Furnivall, *Digby Plays*, pp. 180–81.
[62] Lines 322–333. Furnivall, *Digby Plays*, p. 182.
[63] Lines 362–366. Furnivall, *Digby Plays*, p. 183.
[64] Lines 266–268. Furnivall, *Digby Plays*, p. 180.
[65] Line 989. Furnivall, *Digby Plays*, p. 205.

Mary Magdalen often invites the audience to see what she has seen. In the York Carpenters' *Resurrection*, when the Magdalen arrives at the empty tomb, she reminisces on what she had seen at the Crucifixion,

> When I think about that body free,
> How it was spilled.
> Both feet and hands nailed to a tree,
> Without any guilt.
> Without any guilt the þe trewe was tane,
> For trespas did he neuere none,
> þe woundes he suffered many one
> Was for my misse.
> It was my dede he was for slayne
> And nothyng his.[66]

Her account serves as a guidebook on how viewers should, like her, feel the pain that Christ suffered. The Magdalen again expresses her desire to see and feel Christ's bodily pain in the Towneley *Resurreccio Domini*,

> Alas! that I shuld se hys pyne,
> Or that I shuld his lyfe tyne,
> ffor to ich sore he was medecyne
> And boytte of all;
> help and hold to euer ilk hyne
> To hym wold call.[67]

Later in that play, after the angel announces the Resurrection, Mary Magdalen is left alone on stage, and again she focuses the audience on the wounds of Christ:

> Alas What shall now worth on me?
> My catyf hart will breke in thre
> when that I thynk on that ilk bodye
> how it was spylt;
> Thrugh feete and handys nalyd was he
> Withoutten gylt.
> …
> how myght I, bot I lufyd that swete
> That for me suffred woundys wete,
> Sythen to be grafen vnder the grete,

[66] Lines 272–281. Beadle, *York Plays*, p. 351.
[67] Lines 339–345. George England, ed., *The Towneley Plays* (London: Oxford University Press, 1897), p. 316.

> Sich kyndnes kythe;
> Ther is nothyng till that we mete
> may make me blythe.[68]

In many of these plays, Mary Magdalen's laments are accompanied by gestures that enhance her shared suffering. As early as the twelfth century, in a liturgical play from Tours, she appeared weeping and clasping her hands.[69] This tradition continued into the fifteenth century: in the Skinners' *Resurrection* from Chester, the Magdalen declares that she wrings her hands because she wanders in woe.[70] In the Digby *Resurrection* she also wrings her hands as she recalls the events of Good Friday:

> Now may I wringe, both wepe & wayle,
> Myndinge on Friday his gret bataile[71]

As can be seen, the primary role played by Mary Magdalen in many plays was that of a witness, sharing her sorrow as she invites others, including the audience, to share in her experiences. She appears in this same guise in Hugo's panel, where she wrings her hands and looks straight at the viewer, a pose that repeats the sort of direct address that characterized her role on the late-medieval stage. Hugo, like so many dramatists, used Mary Magdalen to engage viewers with the scene and underscore its impact and resonance.[72]

Hugo van der Goes would certainly have been familiar with such dramatized versions of the Magdalen. Countless Netherlandish cities staged Passion plays that included scenes of the Crucifixion, Deposition, and Resurrection. Such a sequence of scenes seems also to have formed part of Brussels's seven *Bliscappen* plays. The surviving text of the

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[68] Lines 408–429. England, *Towneley Plays*, pp. 318–19.
[69] Haskins, *Mary Magdalen*, pp. 209–210.
[70] Line 311. Mills, *Chester Mystery Cycle*, p. 327.
[71] Lines 1117–1119. Furnivall *Digby Plays*, p. 209.
[72] For more on this aspect of late-medieval stagecraft, see Fichte, *Expository Voices*, 27; and Hans-Jürgen Diller, "Theatrical Pragmatics: the Actor-Audience Relationship from the Mystery Cycles to the Early Tudor Comedies," in *Drama in the Middle Ages. Comparative and Critical Essays. Second Series*, eds. Clifford Davidson and John H. Stroupe, AMS Studies in the Middle Ages 18 (New York: AMS Press, 1991), p. 322. The staging device is discussed in relation to plays in York in Clifford Davidson, "The Realism of the York Realist and the York Passion," *Speculum* 50 (1975), pp. 270–83.
The role of Mary Magdalen as audience surrogate in the *Passion* by Jean Michel, from 1486, is discussed by Maurice Accarie, *Le théâtre sacré de la fin du moyen âge. Étude sur le sense moral de la Passion de Jean Michel* (Geneva: Droz, 1979), esp. pp. 151–54, and 228–29.

Seventh Joy features an epilogue listing the subject of each play; it states that the subject of the *Fifth Joy of the Virgin* was the Resurrection, "and it was not simple."[73] Unfortunately the text for this play does not survive, but the other surviving *Bliscappen* fragments demonstrate that each *Joy* had multiple scenes framing and expanding the titular subject. Thus the Crucifixion and Deposition probably figured in the *Fifth Joy*, and given the connections between the Brussels plays and other contemporary examples, the Magdalen certainly played a similar role. Performed once every seven years, the *Vijfste Bliscap* would have been mounted in Brussels in 1473, and again in 1480; this second occasion coincides with the period often assigned to Hugo's *Lamentation*.

Considering the diptych as a whole, Hugo situated his Magdalen midway between Eve and Mary; her laments, directed at the viewer, become a potent reminder of the despair brought to all by the Fall of Man. She represents a perfect foil to the figures in the left panel, a role that would have been obvious to those familiar with the late-medieval stage. In dramas, Adam and Eve often prefigured the Magdalen's gestures as they expressed their remorse after the Fall. In York, as well as in the earlier Norwich play, Adam and Eve wring their hands as they weep and lament.[74] Certainly these dramatized laments were intended to foreshadow the sorrows of Christ's followers, and indeed Adam's laments often included prophecies that point directly to the Passion of Christ.[75]

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[73] "Sine hoge verrisen en was niet sempel, / Dat es de Vifste, dat elc versta" (lines 1717–1718): Beuken, *Bliscap*, p. 213.

[74] "Therefor ower handes we may wrynge with most dullfull song" (line 88): Manly, *Specimens*, 1, p. 4; "Alas for sorowe and care / Oure handis may we wryng" (lines 174–175): Beadle, *York Plays*, p. 69. The first couple's tearful lamentations were a staple of many medieval dramas. In the N-Town plays, Adam cries, "My wepyng xal be lange fresch" (line 315): Spector, *N-Town Play*, p. 34. In the earlier Norwich *Fall*, he proclaims, "Wythe dolorous sorowe we may wayle and wepe / Bothe nyght and daye in sorowe, sy thys full depe" (lines 89–90): Manly, *Specimens*, 1, p. 4. In the later sixteenth-century Norwich play Adam and Eve were even led away by personifications of Dolor and Myserye (lines 111–118). Manly, *Specimens*, 1, pp. 10–11.

[75] In the Chester Drapers' guild's *Fall of Man*, Adam dreams "that God will come from Heaven on high / to overcome the Devil so sly / and light into my kind; / and my blood that he will win / that I so lost for my sin; / a New Law there shall begin / and so men shall it find" (lines 450–456): Mills, *Chester Mystery Cycle*, p. 41. By the sixteenth century, vague allusions to salvation gave way to specific references to Christ. In the later Norwich play, the Holy Ghost appears to Adam to encourage him in his sorrow: "Take owte of the Godspell that yt the requyre, / Fayth in Chryst Jhesu and grace thatt ensewe" (lines 130–131). To this Adam responds, "Nowe fele I such comforte, my syns they be unlode / And layde on Chrystes back, which is my joye

Those familiar with dramatic conventions would have understood Hugo's Adam and Eve as figures who illustrate a transition from hope to sorrow.[76] So too they would have seen his Magdalen as the antidote, an illustration of the reverse transition from sorrow to joy. Just as she did on stage, Hugo's figure invites us to follow her example, her sorrow touching our hearts to bring about our own penitence.[77] Yet Hugo leaves the viewers in sadness. Mary Magdalen projects toward us her misery, and focuses our attention on the broken body of Christ; she has not yet found her joy, she is not yet transformed by the coming Resurrection. For this role, one can again turn to the late-medieval stage: even after the angel tells Mary Magdalen that Christ is risen, she often continues to lament, vowing to sit and wait until she actually sees him again.

While Hugo's artistic activity brought him into close contact with theatrical productions, his knowledge of late-medieval dramas was far from unique. Most citizens of the Burgundian Netherlands would have been well acquainted with dramatic productions. Nearly every city and village mounted such dramas at least annually, and usually in the company of relics or cult statues. While medieval dramas served many purposes, the presence of cult objects helped heighten the devotional character of the staged scenes, and many cities took particular care to preserve the sanctity of the event.

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and lyght / This Dolor and Mysery I fele to me no wight; / No deth is overcum by fore predestinacion, / And we attayned wyth Chryst in heavenly consolacion" (lines 146–150): Manly, *Specimens*, 1, pp. 11–12.

Again these traditions can be traced across centuries and national boundaries: the *Figure* of God in the twelfth-century *Jeu d'Adam* tells the Serpent that a woman and her son will conquer him: "She yet shall bring thy head full low / There yet shall spring from her a Root / That all thy cunning shall confute" (lines 488–490): Stone, "Adam," p. 175. The last lines that Adam delivers in that play also point forward to the savior: "Sometime atonement will our grace efface / And I shall know God's favor and his grace; / His power will bring us from that evil place" (lines 588–590): Stone, "Adam," p. 178. The Brussels *Eerste Bliscap* lacks any such specific prophecies, but Adam's lament does mention his desire for charity from God: "maer hopen wi inder caritaten / Die ons de here van desen wil geven" (lines 365–366): Beuken, *Bliscap*, 70. This then leads to another scene, quite common in Medieval theater, where Satan argues for the punishment of Adam before God, who instead decides to send Christ to Earth.

[76] Davidson, *Creation to Doom*, p. 153.

[77] Chauvin, "The Role of Mary Magdalene," p. 101. The Magdalen would have been an equally appealing surrogate to male audiences: in the dramas she often performed male duties once she was forgiven. In the Digby plays, for example, her miracles mirror those of Christ. For more on the Magdalen's cross-gender appeal, see Normington, *Gender and Medieval Drama*, p. 106.

An ideal viewer of these religious dramas is represented in the play entitled *Mariken van Nieuwmeghen*, probably from the late fifteenth century.[78] In this drama, Mariken ("Little Mary") was possessed by the demon Moenen, who forced her to change her name to Emmeken ("Little Em") to remove any reminder of the Virgin Mary. After consorting together for seven years in Antwerp, Emmeken and Moenen returned to Nijmegen; they arrived on the day of the annual procession, where vast crowds had gathered to watch a "waghenspel." This sparked Emmeken's memory,

> Oh yes! They perform it every year on this day. If I remember correctly it's a play called *Masscheroene*. The excellence of this play is impossible to exaggerate…I remember my uncle saying that this play is better than some sermons. Sometimes good lessons can be learned from such plays.

The demon Moenen agreed with her about the impact of mystery plays, swearing, "By Lucifer's asshole, I'm afraid she'd hear something which would make her regret or repent everything she's done."[79] The *Masscheroene* play-within-a-play presented a staple of later medieval dramatists, the so-called "Parliament in Heaven," where characters argue over the fate of mankind before the throne of God.[80] In the *Mariken* version, the character Masscheroene is the devil's advocate, while the Virgin pleads mankind's case. "Even if a person has committed all the sins one could possibly imagine," Mary states, "once he acknowledges them in true repentance, he will be saved." Emmeken realizes that these words apply directly to her, and cries out:

> This is better than any sermon!…Lord God, how my blood is stirred by my emotions while listening to this wagon play!…Only now, for the first time, do tears begin to pour down my cheeks. Oh what remorse I felt while listening to those words.[81]

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[78] The full title is "Die waerachtige ende een seer wonderlijke historie van Mariken van Nieuwmeghen die meer dan seven iaren metten duvel woende ende verkeerde." ("The true and very strange story of Mariken van Nijmegen who lived for more than seven years with the Devil and kept company with him.") The literature on this play is extensive; see Therese Decker, and Martin W. Walsh, eds., *Mariken van Nieumegen: A Bilingual Edition* (Columbia SC: Camden House, 1994).

[79] Decker and Walsh, *Mariken van Nieumegen*, pp. 91–93.

[80] The 'Parliament' scene also formed part of Brussels's *First Joy of Mary*; Peter Meredith, and Lynette Muir, "The Trial in Heaven in the *Eerste Bliscap* and Other European Plays," *Dutch Crossing* 22 (April 1984), pp. 84–92.

[81] Decker and Walsh, *Mariken van Nieumegen*, pp. 98–103.

While Emmeken's response to the staged drama represents the devotional attitude of an ideal audience member, her conversion on viewing a processional play must have been plausible. The playwrite sets the actions in a real and nearby place, Gelderland, and situates it in the present.[82] Efforts to ensure the play's plausibility were also signaled by its full title, "The true and very strange story…," and reiterated in its epilogue:

> Dearly beloved in God, without a doubt this is what really happened in the past, even if some people deny it. But, if you went to the city of Maastricht, to the Convent of the Repentant Sinners, there you would see Emmeken's grave…and…carved in beautiful letters, you can read about how and when this all occurred, about her way of life and the penance she endured. I believe the story all the more because of this evidence.[83]

Emmeken must have reflected a very real part of the medieval viewing audience: she came to the production more curious than devout, but left the play deeply affected. In this respect, religious dramas were indeed "better than any sermon," and devout reactions must have been commonplace.

Like medieval dramas, diptychs served many purposes. Hugo's diptych functioned primarily within the devotional realm, making its owner not unlike the devout viewers of religious plays. But exactly who this owner was remains a mystery. The only clue to his/her identity is the figure of St. Genevieve on the verso of the left panel. Genevieve is best known as the patron saint of Paris, but some cities in the Low Countries also had chapels or churches dedicated to her; little of this, at least as yet, gets us any closer to identifying the diptych's original owner.[84] Equally unhelpful is a coat of arms from the reverse of the *Lamentation*, which only denote later, perhaps Habsburg, ownership.[85]

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[82] The play probably predates its first publication in *c.* 1515: one of its characters debates the imprisonment of Duke Arnold of Gelderland, an event from 1465–71; Decker and Walsh, *Mariken van Nieumegen*, pp. 1ff.

[83] Decker and Walsh, *Mariken van Nieumegen*, pp. 132–133.

[84] Elizabeth Dhanens suggested that it might have been commissioned by the Ghent burger Pieter de Zickele, as a memorial to his father Nicolas who had died in 1475; Dhanens, *Hugo van der Goes*, pp. 234–37.

[85] The reverse shows traces of an shield displaying a black eagle, which is mostly destroyed. This shield was held by two figures, perhaps wild men, of which only the feet survive; Hand *et al.*, *Prayers and Portraits*, p. 94. Dhanens has raised the possibility that this might tie the panel to Maximilian of Austria, but admits that, in all probability, the device was painted in the seventeenth century, when the painting

While Hugo's Vienna diptych is large enough to have been displayed in a chapel, its form—painted on the reverse of both panels—suggests that it was probably handled in private, opened and closed often, and viewed from multiple sides. With St. Genevieve painted on the reverse of the left panel, the diptych would have been opened very much like a book.[86] Other diptychs even imitate the form of books, while others were stored in pouches, following a practice commonly used for prayer books.[87] After opening it, the owner would either have stood the diptych upright or rested it on a cushioned surface, again imitating the practice with prayerbooks. In either event its primary images would have been seen at angles to one another, and its owner would have entered into its space within an intimate devotional context. Like a book or a religious drama, it would have stimulated prayer and helped in its owner's quest for personal salvation.

In the Vienna diptych Hugo van der Goes has presented its viewer with a private command performance. His Magdalen breaks down helps break down perceptual barriers between the viewer and the image, just as she did on the medieval stage; she encourages the user to imagine her/himself as an extended part of the religious scene. Some have suggested that Hugo saw the figure of Nicodemus as his own surrogate.[88] Perhaps it might be better stated that this surrogate role was played by Mary Magdalen. While it is tempting to see her as a psychological portrait of Hugo, deep in the depression that engulfed the end of his life, the Magdalen would have served as a surrogate for any viewer who remembered her role on the medieval stage, a figure who allows an imaginative and empathic entry into the scene.

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entered the collection of the Habsburg Archduke Leopold Wilhelm; Dhanens, *Hugo van der Goes*, p. 234.

[86] Hélène Verougstraete, "Diptychs with Instructions for Use," in *Essays in Context: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych*, eds. John Hand and Ron Spronk (New Haven / London: Yale University Press), p. 158.

[87] A diptych in the Louvre from circa 1440, attributed to the circle of Jan van Eyck, depicts St. John the Baptist and the Virgin and Child, and has edges painted to resemble pages of a book; Hand *et al.*, *Prayers and Portraits*, pp. 78–81, cat. 9. Nicolas Froment's *Diptych of Duke Rene I of Anjou*, circa 1480 and also in the Louvre, is preserved with its original pouch; Hand *et al.*, *Prayers and Portraits*, pp. 82–87, cat. 10. Another exceptional diptych made for Duke Philip the Good (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex 1800) has a frame which also serves as a cover for an illuminated prayer book, so that the prayers were certain to be read while viewing the diptych; Hand *et al.*, *Prayers and Portraits*, p. 5, fig. 3.

[88] Don Denny, "A Symbol in Hugo van der Goes' *Lamentation*," *Gazette des beaux-arts* 95 (March 1980): pp. 121–25.

13. COMMUNICATING WITH THE HOST: IMAGERY AND EUCHARISTIC CONTACT IN LATE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY RENAISSANCE ITALY

Kristen Van Ausdall

Proximity to saints and their relics was a popular goal in the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance, and this desire was catered to in a number a ways. However, Christian theology constantly emphasized that proximity to Christ was the clearest way to salvation. Even the popularity of the Virgin Mary was largely based on a fundamental consanguity with her son,[1] and in the yearning toward salvation there was an even closer connection than the mother—Christ himself as celebrated in the bread and wine of the Mass. (fig. 13.1) The devout could interact with God in the form most available to humanity—the Eucharistic Christ.

As theologians and preachers asserted, the laity had access to the Divine whenever they entered a church due to the presence of the reserved Sacrament.[2] Indeed, in Christianity the closest contact humankind can achieve with the divine is the reception of the Body of Christ

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[1] Mary gave Christ his human flesh and blood and was often considered a tabernacle for Christ's body, both literally and figuratively, and sacred art reflected this status, often in explicit ways. Sculpted figures of Mary in the late Middle Ages, for example, sometimes opened to expose a figure of the crucified Christ or Host wafers. The *Vierge Ouvrant* of *c.* 1300 in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, illustrates this types; A seated Virgin nurses the Infant Christ, but the hinged sculpture opens to reveal a "Throne of Grace" which originally portrayed God the Father holding Christ on the Cross and the dove of the holy spirit descending between them (the figures of Christ and the dove of the holy spirit are lost). For a discussion of the Metropolitan Museum of Art *Vierge Ouvrant*, see Henk van Os, *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe, 1300–1500*, trans by M. Hoyle (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 50–52.

[2] The Franciscan preacher San Bernardino of Siena, for example, in a sermon delivered in 1424 at Santa Croce, Florence, in listing the reasons to be reverent in church states first that it is the "place of God and the dwelling of God,…and second, that the True Presence of the body of Jesus Christ, is always in the church and consecrated at the high altar." He asserts that "When entering a church, the devout should first make the proper reverence to the Body of Jesus Christ." Bernardino of Siena, *Le Prediche Volgari*, ed. C. Cannarozzi, Florentine Sermons, 4 vols., (Pistoia: Pacinotti 1934), I, Sermon 14, pp. 211–214. Bernardino's statement echoes the words of St. Francis regarding the presence of the Body of Christ in the church. For Francis's Testament see Marion A. Habig, ed. *St. Francis of Assisi, Writings and Early Biographies, English*

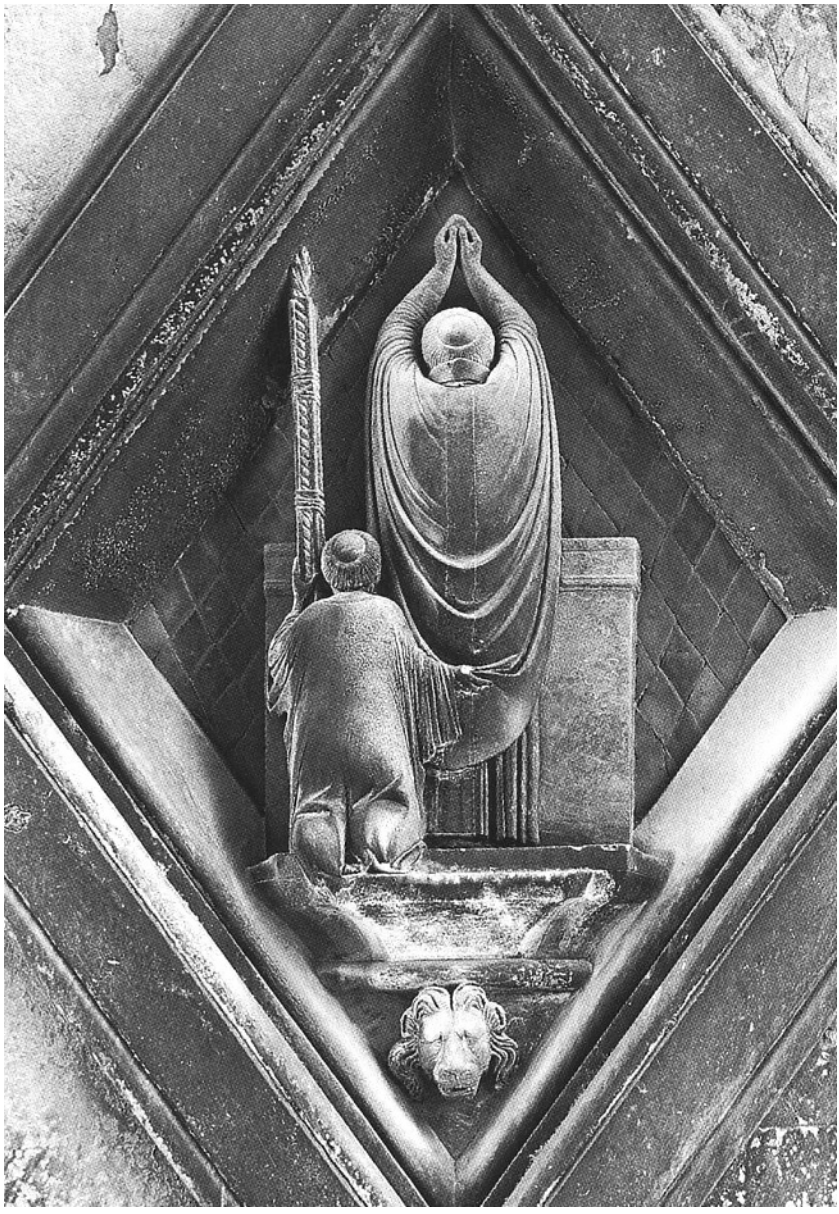

Fig. 13.1 Cathedral Workshop, *Priest Elevating the Host (Sacrament of the Eucharist)*, 1350s, marble and glazed terracotta relief, 87 × 63.5 cm, from the Campanile, Florence, now in the Museo del'Opera del Duomo, Florence. Photo: author.

in Eucharistic form: in this central sacrament of the Church the worthy recipient ingests salvation.[3] Yet communion was not necessarily frequent among the laity,[4] and visual encounters augmented, focused, and at times created an alternate for physical contact. Although theological tracts carefully outlined the complex nature of the Eucharist, preaching and lay practice often emphasized the corporeality of the Host, and visual art frequently underscored this simplified meaning.[5] Thus this essay will focus on some of the ways in which artistic production could target and guide the desire to see and fully connect with the Eucharistic Christ. In this regard, key questions arise about the way the laity may have interacted with Eucharistic imagery. How did art facilitate interaction with the Eucharist? Did the body of Christ function like saints' relics in the laity's need for interaction? If so, could visual art satisfy the desire for contact with the body of Christ?

Despite a long struggle and ongoing discussion regarding its details, the meaning of the Eucharist in Christian worship was essentially

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Omnibus of the Sources for the Life of St. Francis (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1973), p. 67.

[3] Worthy reception was an important issue in Eucharistic theology. For a concise discussion see Gary Macy, "Reception of the Eucharist According to the Theologians: A Case of Theological Diversity in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries," in *Theology and the University*, ed. John Apczynski, vol. 33 (1987), pp. 15–16. My deepest thanks go to Dr. Macy for his generosity over the years in sharing his vast knowledge of Eucharistic issues.

[4] There is conflicting evidence regarding the frequency of lay communion, and the subject should be dealt with cautiously. The 1215 Lateran Council called for the laity to take communion at least once a year, at Easter, but it is evident that customs regarding the frequency of communion were determined by a number of factors such as geographic location, era, and individual piety. In addition, social standing may have helped to determine the frequency of communion and access to the Host. On these issues see Peter Browe, *De frequenti communione in ecclesia occidentali usque ad annum c. 1000* (Rome: Apud aedes Pont. Universitatis Gregorianae, 1932). For the devotion to the Eucharist beyond a liturgical setting see Nathan Mitchell, *Cult and Controversy: The Worship of the Eucharist Outside the Mass* (New York: Pueblo Publishing, 1982). Even before the Reformation, the call for more frequent communion was commonly heard. In the fifteenth century such diverse figures as the German mystic, Meister Eckhart, Bernardino da Siena, and Nicholas of Cusa were advocates of regular lay communion.

[5] This corporeal notion manifested itself in a number of ways, with imagery that paralleled its emphasis on blood and miraculous demonstrations of the Eucharist. For the focus on the Blood of Christ, see Caroline Walker Bynum, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007); for Host miracles, see the indispensible works by Peter Browe, *Die Eucharistischen Wunder des Mittelalters* (Breslau: Verlag Müller & Seiffert, 1938) and Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christ. The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

established by the late Middle Ages—it was the true body, the *corpus verum*, the unmitigated, unmediated presence of Christ. To ingest Christ in the form of a small unleavened wafer of bread or in a sip of wine from a cup was the ultimate participatory act of Christianity, yet for most people only the bread was available for communion, and even it was not generally available on a daily, weekly, or even monthly basis.[6] Thus the act of seeing the Eucharist, as a number of scholars have shown, became an important part of the way the pious could experience the central Sacrament.[7] One could catch a glimpse of the Eucharist during the mass ritual, if close enough to see the priest raise the Host.[8] However, difficulty seeing the Eucharist was an ongoing problem for the ordinary lay population. At times this can be attributed simply to an infelicitous viewing point, though in some churches choir screens both added to the struggle and, contradictorily, focused attention on

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[6] Charles M.A. Caspars, Gerard Lukken, and Gerard Rouwhorst, eds., *Bread of Heaven: Customs and Practices Surrounding Holy Communion. Essays in the History of Liturgy and Culture* (Kampen, the Netherlands: Kok Pharos, 1995). Treatises on the mass and synodal legislation limited the period of reservation of a consecrated Host to seven days; on the eighth day it was to be replaced by fresh Hosts. Hosts were to be consumed by priests, servers and, on such special occasions as Easter, by the communicating laity, and were occasionally taken out on visitations of the sick, for some healing and blessing rituals, and for use in the Easter sepulcher. See Browe, *De frequentia communione*. Bohemian practice in the early fifteenth century insisted on *utraquism*, the offering of both the bread and wine of the Eucharist to the laity. Rome consistently battled with the renegade Bohemians to alter this practice, and asserted that only the bread should be available, since the body and blood were present in both species of the Eucharist. Howard Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 97–140.

[7] Still essential to the study of viewing the Host are Édouard Dumoutet, *Le désir de voir l'hostie et les origins de la devotion au Saint-Sacrament* (Paris: Gabriel Beauchesne, 1926), Peter Browe, *Die Verehrung der Eucharistie im Mittelalter* (Munich: Herder, 1933), and Caspars, Lukken, and Rouwhorst, eds., *Bread of Heaven*. From the viewpoint of sacred drama in the Middle Ages, see Michal A. Kobialka, *This is My Body: Representational Practices in the Early Middle Ages* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), esp. pp. 197–216.

[8] Caroline Bynum, *Wonderful Blood*, p. 87, states that by the thirteenth century: "The faithful were urged to encounter with eyes where encounter with lips was dangerous and rare, to 'eat' by 'seeing.'" She cites stories of devotees who attended "mass only for the moment of elevation, racing from church to church to see as many consecrations as possible, and shouting at the priest to hold the host up higher." Conversely, theologians had often urged the veiling of the Eucharist, arguing that it was necessary to encourage faith without the seeing the physical evidence (which of course echoes Christ's words to Thomas after the resurrection). On pp. 88–89 Bynum notes that belief would not be necessary if one simply saw the flesh and blood. This strain of thought continued into the fifteenth century, emphasizing that the body and blood of Christ were essentially unseen. In lay worship, however, the importance of sight prevailed as a way to simplify and explain difficult theological concepts.

the altar through portals and other perforations.[9] Their partially concealing nature, which heightened the mystery and protected the clergy, could be unsatisfying for those who had a disadvantageous view of the sanctuary during the celebration of Mass.[10] In its stead, one could view the Host in a monstrance outside the Mass, but even that was not available to everyone at all times because of the need to protect the holy of holies. Constant display was felt to devalue the Host and put it at risk of desecration or degradation.[11] Moreover, a monstrance is relatively small, and as much as the laity desired to see the exposed Eucharist, it takes considerable imagination to visualize the humanity of Christ when confronted with the abstraction of a Host wafer in

[9] Marcia B. Hall, "The Tramezzo in the Italian Renaissance Revisited," in *Thresholds of the sacred: architectural, art historical, liturgical, and theological perspectives on religious screens, East and West*, ed. Sharon E.J. Gerstel, (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library, 2006), pp. 215–232 on Italian choir screens (in Italy generally called *tramezzi*), is an extremely helpful updating of her earlier articles on the subject. For a bibliography of Hall's earlier articles on choir screens in Italy see p. 215, footnote 1. For choir screens in northern Europe, see Jacqueline E. Jung, "Seeing Through Screens: The Gothic Choir Enclosure as Frame" in *Thresholds of the sacred: architectural, art historical, liturgical, and theological perspectives on religious screens, East and West*, ed. Sharon E.J. Gerstel (Washington D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library, 2006), pp. 185–214. See also Jung, "Beyond the Barrier: The Unifying Role of the Choir Screen in Gothic Churches," *Art Bulletin* 82 (Dec. 2000), pp. 622–657.

[10] Hall ("Tramezzo," pp. 215–232) asserts that the privacy of the clergy during liturgical functions was the main reason for the use of choir screens in Italy. They were required for monastic churches, but the issue of their use in other churches is less certain. Churches were divided by gender as well, and in some locales this division cut the nave horizontally, creating a space for women at a much greater distance from the high altar. Wealthy donors may have been allowed behind the choir screen on some occasions, and Hall hypothesizes that this might have included women of the family. Speaking particularly of Northern Europe, Jung, "Seeing Through Screens," p. 186, points out that choir screens had both "solidity and permeability" that "at once limits and facilitates" the ability to view the sanctuary. Emphasizing their openness, Jung (p. 189) cites Dominican legislation that required the doors of choir screens be opened during the elevation of the Host.

[11] Consecrated Hosts were intended in early Christianity to be kept in a way that emphasized their fundamental difference from any other artifact. The earliest extant reference to reservation is in the Apostolic Constitution of Hippolytus (*c.* 215): "Omnis autem festinet ut non infidelis gustet de eucharistia, aut ne sorix aut animal aliud, aut ne quid cadeat et pereat deo eo." Bernard Botte, ed., *Sources chretiennes*, 11, 2nd ed. (Paris: Du Cerf, 1968), p. 120. On the reservation of the species in the Middle Ages see especially Lawrence Köster, *De custodia sanctissimae eucharistiae* (Rome: Catholic Book Agency, 1940), pp. 3–96 and Daniel R. Cahill, *The Custody of the Holy Eucharist* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1950), pp. 3–18. See also Durandus, *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum a reverendissimo domino Gulielmo Durando* (Naples: Dura, 1859), Book 1, which discusses the issue of the purity of the Host and the acceptable duration of storage.

such a vessel.[12] The vessel itself was similar to reliquaries for saints' remains, pieces of the true cross, or even holy Blood relics, but was less graphic since the "relic" in this case was visually abstract. The Host in a monstrance gave little indication of the corporeal Christ, despite its theological status as both the body and blood of Christ and as a sign.

In addition, the underlying concepts imbedded in Eucharistic theology were so intricate as to be nearly impenetrable to most of the laity. Viewing a flat piece of bread and envisioning the suffering body of Christ was aided considerably by graphic stories that underscored the reality of transubstantiation, and visual images made the tales ever more explicit. As an aid to understanding, a variety of themes developed to explain not just the theology of the Eucharist, but also its inestimable value to Christians. One such theme, which developed over time, was that of the Mass of St. Gregory the Great, with its fundamental focus on the doubt engendered by the difficulty in imagining the Host as the Body and Blood of Christ.[13]

Despite the wide range of these images, the basics of the theme remained the same: doubt is erased when the Eucharist is transformed into bleeding flesh. In the fourteenth century, the bleeding flesh in Gregory's miracle was still inexplicit, as in the fresco in the Chapel of the Corporal in Orvieto Cathedral.[14] (fig. 13.2) However in the fifteenth

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[12] Godefridus J.C. Snoek, *Medieval Piety from Relics to the Eucharist. A Process of Mutual Interaction*, *Studies in the History of Christian Thought*, vol. 63, ed. Heiko A. Oberman (Leiden: Brill Academic Press, 1995) discusses the relationship between traditional relics and Eucharistic relics in the late Middle Ages.

[13] For the history of the Mass of St. Gregory see J.A. Endres, "Die Darstellung der Gregoriusmesse im Mittelalter," *Zeitschrift für christliche Kunst* 30 (1917), pp. 146–156. For the connection to the Man of Sorrows see Erwin Panofsky, "'Imago Pietatis,' Ein Beitrag zur Typengeschichte des 'Schmerzensmanns' und der 'Maria mediatrix,'" in *Festschrift für Max J. Friedländer zum 60. Geburstage* (Leipzig, 1927), pp. 261–308. For the Eucharistic character of the Man of Sorrows see Romuald Bauerreiss. *Pie Jesu: das Schmerzensmann-Bild und sein Einfluss auf die Mittelalterliche Frömmigkeit.* Munich: K. Widmann, 1931. For the image in Italy and its relationship to the Man of Sorrows, see Colin Eisler, "The Golden Christ of Cortona and the Man of Sorrows in Italy," *Art Bulletin* 51 (1969), pp. 107–118, 233–246. See also Caroline Walker Bynum, "Seeing and Seeing Beyond: The Mass of St. Gregory in the Fifteenth Century" in *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theology in the Middle Ages*, eds. Anne-Marie Bouché and Jeffrey Hamburger (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), pp. 208–240.

[14] The Chapel of the Corporal in Orvieto is extensively decorated with images focusing on Eucharistic miracles (1357–62) attributed to Ugolino di Prete Ilario. The west wall flanking the altar is devoted to a variety of miraculous incidents involving the Host, and the east wall concentrates on the narrative of the miraculous Mass of Bolsena. The relics of that mass are contained within the large tabernacle/reliquary on the altar. For recent discussions of the frescoes in this chapel see Dominique Suhr,

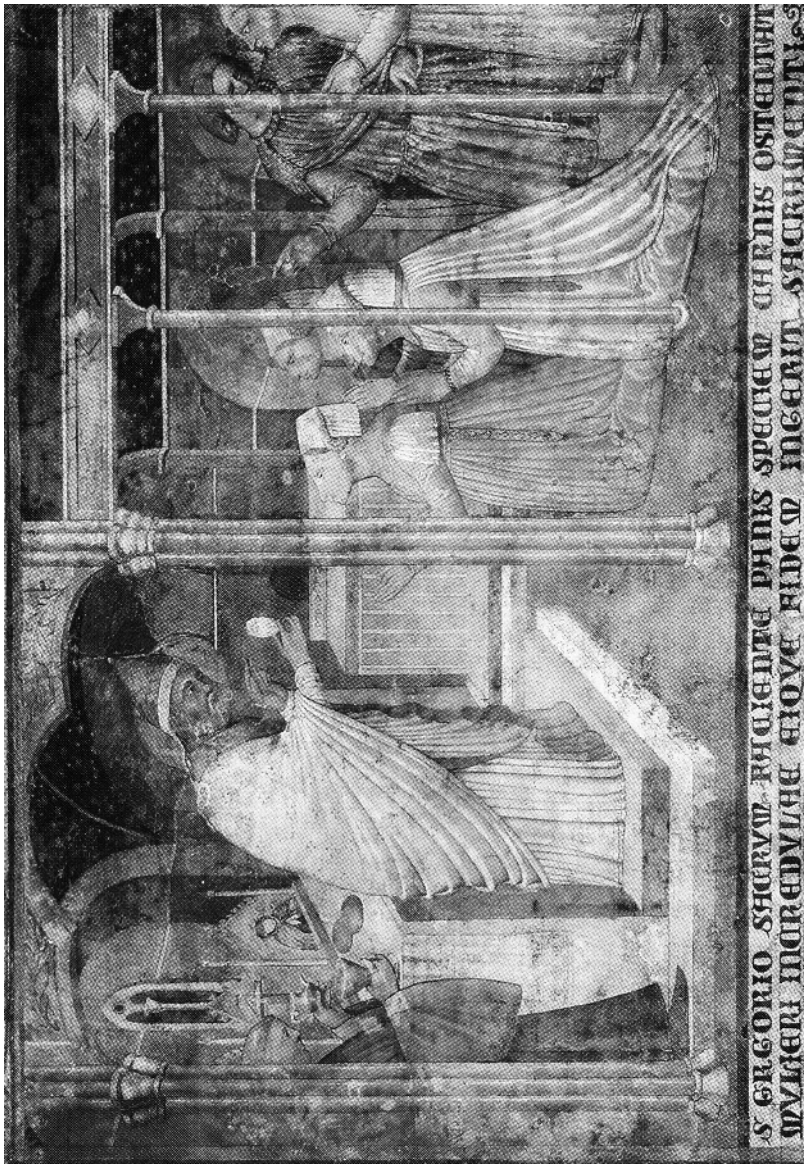

Fig. 13.2 Ugolino di Prete Ilario, *Miraculous Mass of St. Gregory*, fresco, 1357–1363, Chapel of the Corporal, Orvieto Cathedral. Photo: author.

century, the bleeding flesh was most often represented as that of a standing Christ on the altar displaying his wounds and often profusely bleeding into a chalice, originally a fourteenth-century Roman version that spread to northern Europe.[15] (fig. 13.3) Visualizing the humanity of Christ, especially when connected to the Eucharistic species, gained immense importance in the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries. Given the spottiness of communion practice among the laity, the desire to "see salvation," and the difficulty in doing so, visual imagery helped to fill the void, as well as explain or simplify complex theological ideas. Before looking more closely at the question of practice, a brief look at both the theology of the Eucharist and its popular conception will lay a foundation for understanding the variety of means used to elucidate and encourage Eucharistic piety.

The Eucharist in the Late Middle Ages

Before the Dugento, notions concerning the relationship among the material world, symbolic ideas, and the sacred were open to interpretation and challenge. Its sacramental characterization developed to help formulate the symbolic system under which Christians lived and

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Corpus Christi and the Capella del Corporale at Orvieto (Ph.D. diss., University of Virginia, 2000), Kristen Van Ausdall, "Doubt and Authority in the Host-Miracle Shrines of Orvieto and Wilsnack" in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, eds. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe, (Leiden: Brill Academic Press, 2005), pp. 513–538, and Dominique Rigaux, "Miracle, reliques, et images dans le *chapelle du Corporal* à Orvieto 1357–1364" in *Pratiques de l'Eucharistie dans les Églises d'Orient et d'Occident Antiquité et Moyen Âge* 1, Nicole Bériou, Béatrice Caseau, Dominique Rigaux, eds., 2 vols. (Paris: Institut d' Études Augustiniennes, 2009), pp. 201–245.

[15] An altered account of the Mass of St. Gregory connected the tale to the devotional *imago pietatis*, popular since the latter half of the 14th century. The new version of the story was similar to the older versions; St. Gregory still celebrates his mass in a Roman church, with a doubter in attendance. However, the image of Christ appears to him as if physically present at the moment of consecration. Thus an alternative was created which was far more visually explicit. See Van Ausdall, "Doubt and Authrority," p. 532 and Mitchell Merback, "Channels of Grace: Pilgrimage Architecture, Eucharistic Imagery, and Visions of Purgatory at the Host-Miracle Churches of Late Medieval Germany," esp. pp. 630–632, in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, eds. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe (Leiden: Brill Academic Press, 2005). This altered image is examined in Flora Lewis, "Rewarding Devotion: Indulgences and the Promotion of Images" in *The Church and the Arts, Studies in Church History* 28 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 186. See also Louis Réau, *Iconographie de l'art chrétien* 3 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1958), pp. 614–615 and Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, p. 309.

Fig. 13.3 Master I. A. M. of Zwolle, *Miraculous Mass of St. Gregory*, engraving, 15th century, 13 3/8 × 8 7/8 in (34 × 22.6 cm) Munich, Staaliche Graphische Sammlung. Photo: artwork the public domain.

could obtain salvation.[16] The meaning of the Host was defined and enacted publicly during the mass ritual. One of the key issues that came to bear on the visual arts was the fact that both philosophical and allegorical means were used to help define the Eucharist. Although the mystical and ecclesiastical explanations were often inadvertently at cross purposes, each took part in the development of Eucharistic thought and art.[17] Questions regarding the nature of the mystery were examined and debated consistently from the ninth century on, but were more concretely defined in the thirteenth century. Dominican theologians, particularly Thomas Aquinas, as well as the Franciscan, Bonaventura, were instrumental in this effort, despite differing emphases. Disagreements also surfaced in regard to the exact nature of the miracle of the *Corpus Christi*, pitting the notion of transubstantiation against that of consubstantiation.[18] Thomas Aquinas claimed that:

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[16] In the thirteenth century Thomas Aquinas spoke of the distinction between the ingestion of temporal sustenance and spiritual sustenance; he categorizes the ingestion of the miraculous body of Christ as the Host separately from either a symbolic or a natural act. Aquinas wrote specifically about the sacramental nature of the *Corpus Christi*: "Whatever is eaten as under its natural form, is broken and chewed as under its natural form. But the body of Christ is not eaten as under its natural form, but under the sacramental species." (…illud quod manducatur in propria specie, ipsum et frangitur et masticatur in sua specie. Corpus autem Christi non manducatur in sua specie, sed in specie sacramentali.) *Summa Theologiae*, ed. Dominican Fathers of the English Province, III, q. 77 a 7, r. 3.

[17] For a specific contrast between the mystical and ecclesiastical understandings of the Eucharist see Gary Macy, *The Theologies of the Eucharist in the Early Scholastic Period A Study of the Salvific Function of the Sacrament according to the Theologians c. 1080–c. 1220* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 73–132 and Rubin, (*Corpus Christi*, pp. 12–35) who gives an overview of the theological discussion on the nature of the Eucharist.

[18] Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 29–31 discusses the development of Eucharistic theology between 1150 and 1350 included an Aristotelian philosophy of matter, given moderate expression by Thomas Aquinas and then fully expressed by Duns Scotus. In this view bodies were constituted by two metaphysical principles: matter and form. A body was extended from matter, in a form which governed its particular appearance, in quantity and shape. The substance exists within these two principles, which are nonetheless separate. So the substance of Christ's body in the Eucharist could exist in the appearance of bread, as in the extension of the substance of Christ's body in heaven. Aquinas' theology posited that the whole substance was changed; his is a formulation of transubstantiation, the claim relying on God's intervention in the miracle of transubstantiation. This approach, to which Bonaventura and others subscribed in the second half of the thirteenth century, was rejected by Duns Scotus, who believed God's will was exercised to work a specific change, that of annihilation of the bread at consecration—substitution, rather than change. See David Burr, "Scotus and Transubstantiation," *Medieval Studies* 34, (1972), pp. 336–50 and *idem*., *Eucharistic presence and conversion in late fifteenth-century Franciscan thought* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1984).

> All the substance of the bread is transmuted into the body of Christ… therefore, this is not a formal conversion but a substantial one. Nor does it belong to the species of natural mutations; but, with its own definition, it is called transubstantiation.[19]

Increasingly the Eucharist was seen in light of Aquinas' explanations, but the threatening views of intellectuals and reformers forced theologians and ecclesiastical administrators to reiterate the efficacy of the Eucharist and the clerical role in salvation.[20] The sacraments gave the clergy enormous influence over salvation. The Eucharist in particular was the basis for sacerdotal power, because it alone could be administered solely by priests.

The matter of communion with the Lord's body, however, was not simply a matter of sacerdotal mediation.[21] Instead, Eucharistic theology consistently emphasized the spiritual nature of reception. Two types of Eucharistic reception had been discussed since the eleventh century, both of which assumed that the recipient actually consumed the consecrated species: worthy reception, which was described as spiritual reception, and unworthy reception, which was described as corporeal or sacramental reception.[22] Significantly, a third mode of

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[19] Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* (III q. 75 a.4) as cited by Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, p. 30.

[20] Jean Gerson, in the early fifteenth century, insisted that the Eucharist was granted as a sign of God, to demonstrate His omnipotence, lack of limitation, and freedom from the laws of nature. D.C. Brown, *Pastor and laity in the theology of Jean Gerson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 87. For her discussion of the various disagreements, see Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 34–35, who states that even by the end of the fifteenth century, some theologians still found sacramental theology, particularly the Eucharist, difficult to accept. See also John L. Farthing, *Thomas Aquinas and Gabriel Biel: Interpretations of St. Thomas Aquinas in German Nominalism on the Eve of the Reformation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1988), pp. 87–91, 96–109, 112–131, 191–196. The practice of Utraquism, communion to the laity in both species (bread *and* wine), provoked a strong reaction, ultimately leading to Jan Hus' condemnation and execution at the Council of Constance in 1415. J. Catto, "John Wyclif and the Cult of the Eucharist" in *The Bible in the Medieval World: Essays in Memory of Beryl Smalley*, eds. K. Walsh and D. Wood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), pp. 269–286; Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* pp. 96–104.

[21] Macy, *Theologies of the Eucharist*, asserts that clerical power over the Eucharist was not necessarily intentional in origin nor constructed by a policy consistent from one Pope to another. However, the implications of control over the physical sign could not have escaped the attention of powerful clerics. The potency of Eucharistic worship was capitalized on by different popes and theologians in various eras. In the fifteenth century, the power of the central Sacrament appears to have been exploited quite intentionally by Pope Pius II. This promotion, however, was aided by a number of other religious factors, particularly the visual power of the images of the Eucharist.

[22] Macy, *Theologies of the Eucharist*, p. 47 and *idem*., "Reception of the Eucharist According to the Theologians: A Case of Theological Diversity in the Thirteenth

reception was introduced by the twelfth century—spiritual reception alone.[23] Hypothetically, certain devotional acts could enable a person to receive the full benefits of the Eucharist. As Gary Macy explains, "Three forms of reception were imperfectly associated with the three elements of the Eucharist. Sacramental reception entailed reception of both the *sacramentum* (the species alone) and of the *sacramentum et res* (the Body and Blood of Christ), while spiritual communion entailed reception of the *res* only (a union of faith working in love or according to some writers, the Church as mystical Body). Of course, one could also receive both sacramentally and spiritually when one consumed the species in worthy reception."[24] While a number of theological details remained variable, the efficacy of the Sacrament was believed to be dependent on the recipient's spiritual intentions and ability to understand its meaning.[25] This alternative to ingesting the Eucharist, "spiritual communion," was touted by theologians to varying degrees—sometimes as a lesser substitute when taking the Eucharist was impractical, but occasionally it was viewed as an equivalent salvific experience.[26]

Early Images and the Host

Early manifestations of this theological and spiritual focus on the Body of Christ appeared in a type of contemplative image in Italy by the thirteenth century in the form painted crosses.[27] Early crosses, like the

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and Fourteenth Centuries," *Theology and the University*, ed. John Apczynski, vol. 33 (1987), pp. 15–16. Caroline Bynum, *Wonderful Blood*, p. 87, distinguishes between "ocular communion" and spiritual communion. She stresses that the body of "Christ could be received outside mass, outside church, even outside any except a whispering deep in the heart. Hence Eucharistic presence was both object and absence; it became profoundly inner—unencompassable, untouchable, unseeable."

[23] Macy, "Reception of the Eucharist," p. 16.

[24] *Ibid*.

[25] Macy, "Reception of the Eucharist," p. 15 states "Ever since Paul admonished the Corinthians for their overly enthusiastic celebration of the breaking of the bread, Christian writers have distinguished between worthy and unworthy reception."

[26] *Ibid*.

[27] The origins of these painted crosses in Italy are uncertain, but their popularization tends to coincide with the wave of Byzantine icons and eastern-Empire artists flooding through Venice after the Fourth Crusade's Sack of Constantinople in 1204. Their influence can be seen in many types of painted images in Italy, including images of new saints like Francis and gabled panels with the Madonna and Child. For the most extensive study of Italian crosses, see Evelyn Sandberg-Vavalà, *La Croce dipinta italiana e l'iconografia della Passione* (Verona: Casa Editrice Apollo, 1929).

one originally in the church of San Damiano, Assisi, of the *Christus Triumphans* type, (fig. 13.4) depicted Christ in a miraculous state of living death with eyes open, emphasizing eternal life and the triumph over death. Some of these were used behind altars, and thus became backdrops for the celebration of Mass. Significantly, new liturgical customs had arisen in the twelfth century, including the introduction of the elevation of the Host. When the priest raised the Host, it would be framed by the crucified Christ on the Cross, and the devout could envision the meaning of the bread and wine in a concrete way. This intentional correlation between the Host and the crucified Christ conditioned the devout to "see" the Host as the human God, but clearly emphasized his divine triumph over death.[28] A monstrance on the altar had been the primary means of exposition of the Eucharist in churches, as well as in processions of the feast of *Corpus Christi*,[29] and a spiritual communion could surely be performed before these "reliquaries" for the Host.[30] With such close association between the painted crosses and the raising of the Host, the laity need not be dependent on the action of the celebrant at Mass or glimpsing the Host in a monstrance or pyx. Instead, the devout could contemplate the crucified Christ at

[28] Seeing the Host was an important part of Eucharistic worship, and this longing is expressed repeatedly in the late Middle Ages. See n. 7 above. Snoek, *Medieval Piety*, pp. 284–287 discusses the exposure of the Host which occurred particularly on feast days and for an increasing amount of time during Mass. Moreover, at least in Northern Europe, there was a tradition of keeping the Host in a figure of the Risen Christ. Snoek, p. 288, mentions one that stood on the altar from the late 13th century at the monastery of Weinhausen, containing both a blood relic and a pyx for the consecrated Host: "Through an opening in the side it was possible to catch a glimpse of the Eucharist—or at least the desire to do so was awakened."

[29] A hymn as cited by Charles Kovacs, "Monstrances," *Eucharistic Vessels of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Busch-Reisinger Museum, 1975, p. 101 for the *Corpus Christi* procession demonstrates the emphasis on the act of faith in viewing the Host and the emphasis on the words of consecration:

> Word made flesh, the bread of nature
> by his word to flesh he turns,
> Wine into his blood he changes:
> What through sense no change discerns?
> Only be the heart in earnest,
> Faith her lesson quickly learns.

[30] Snoek, *Medieval Piety*, pp. 292–293, discusses viewing the Eucharist in the context of spiritual communion, and states that, "For the lay person the 'communion with the eyes' implied no confession and no danger of receiving communion unworthily.... The transposed exposition of the relics within the context of Eucharistic devotion gained for its content the exposed Sacrament, which offered the people a divine dimension: affective eye contact and spiritual union with Christ truly present."

Fig. 13.4 Anonymous, *San Damiano Cross*, 12th century, tempera on panel, Oratorio del Crocifisso, Basilica of St. Clare, Assisi, 190 × 120 cm. Photo: author.

will, and the painted image itself could serve as a reminder of the perpetual Eucharistic presence.

In the *Life of St. Francis* in the upper church at Assisi, one scene vividly demonstrates this non-sarcedotal interaction with painted crosses. It should be remembered that Francis was never ordained as a priest, and thus his interaction with this heavily Eucharistic image of Christ occurred without benefit of a priest.[31] In the fresco, we see St. Francis praying fervently on his knees before the *Cross of San Damiano*.[32] (fig. 13.5) As recounted by Francis' biographers, the *Crucifix* speaks, exhorting him to rebuild the Church, which is in ruins before him.[33] Here Francis's legend moves beyond a simple prayerful moment before the altar to an explicit interaction with the Corpus Christi, engendered by the contemplation of his body in this painted representation. The power of the image to represent not just abstract theological ideas, but to respond to specific prayers is manifested in this image. It should be remembered that the fresco was part of a didactic program for pilgrims in the mother church of the Franciscans in Assisi, and provided an

[31] See Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 66–67, for a discussion of Franciscan attitudes to the reception of the Host. Franciscans were not alone in their dedication to the Cross. In the *Art of Devotion* (pp. 61–64, fig. 17) Henk van Os emphasizes the devotional attitudes of the laity toward extreme forms of prayer before a crucifix, telling the story of Andrea Gallerani (died 1251) a Sienese Dominican tertiary who prayed ceaselessly before a crucifix. Sometimes, however, the flesh is weak and he would begin to fall asleep. His solution was to tie a noose around his neck, with the rope connected to a beam, so he would choke if his head began to nod. Andrea's extreme piety was admired; soon after his death an altarpiece was placed in San Domenico in Siena, part of which depicted Andrea kneeling before a crucifix (complete with the noose around his neck).

[32] The *Cross of San Damiano* was relocated to the Church of Santa Chiara in Assisi where, after St. Clare's death (1253), Clarissan nuns moved from San Damiano. For a fascinating study of Clarissan monastic architecture, with an emphasis Eucharistic piety, see Carolyn Bruzelius, "Hearing is Believing. Clarissan Architecture 1213–1340," *Gesta* 31 (1992), pp. 83–91. Bruzelius discusses the shift in focus for nuns from hearing the word of God to seeing the Host.

[33] The early biography by Thomas of Celano, *Saint Francis of Assisi: first and second life of St. Francis with selections from the Treatise on the miracle of blessed Francis.* Trans. P. Hermann (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1988), p. 10, states that, "Led by the Spirit, he went in and fell down before the crucifix in devout and humble supplication; and smitten by unusual visitations, he found himself other than he had been when he entered. While he was thus affected, something unheard of before happened to him: the painted image of Christ crucified moved its lips and spoke. Calling him by name it said: "Francis, go, repair my house, which, as you see, is falling completely to ruin." For different scholarly views of the fresco cycle in the Upper Church at Assisi, see William R. Cook, ed., *The Art of the Franciscan Order in Italy* (Leiden: Brill Academic Press, 2005).

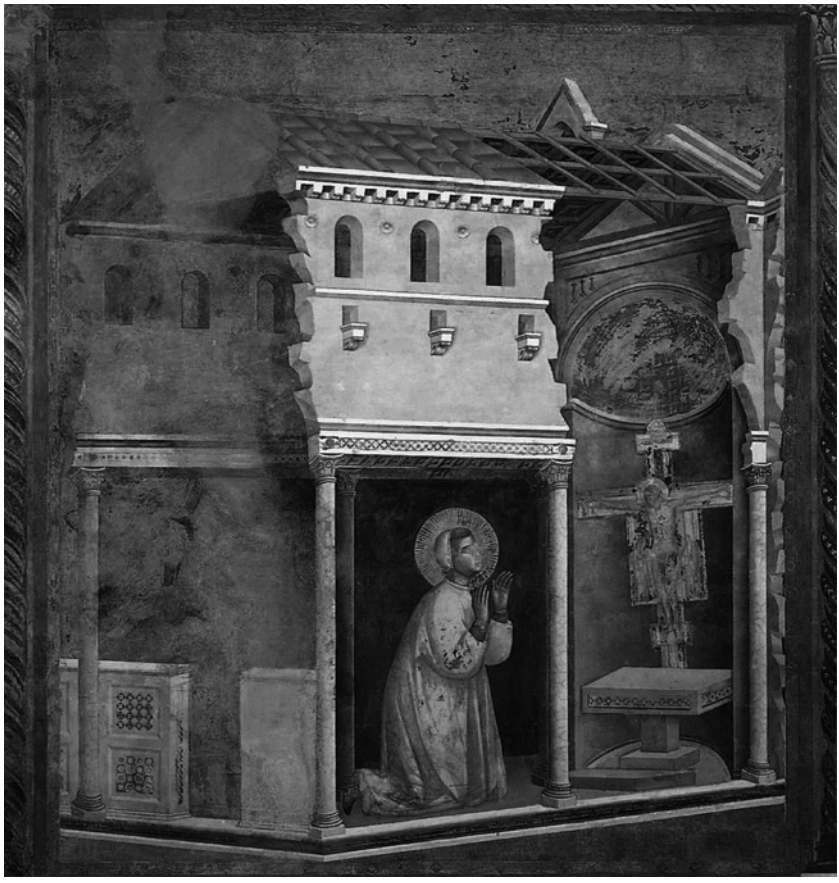

Fig. 13.5 Assisi Master, *Miracle of the Crucifix*, fresco, early 14th century (?), 270 × 230 cm, Legend of St. Francis, Upper Church, San Francesco, Assisi. Photo: author.

ideal example of prayerful contemplation before a Eucharistic image.[34] Thirteenth-century Franciscan theologians helped guide the devotion of the Eucharist to a new expression of individual, heartfelt piety which focuses on physical sensation, as the late thirteenth-century Franciscan meditation, *Stimulus Amoris*, demonstrates:[35]

[34] For a discussion of the popular appeal of this cycle, see James Stubblebine, *Assisi and the Rise of Vernacular Art* (New York: Harper and Row, 1985).

[35] Long thought to be written by the key thirteenth-century Franciscan theologian, St. Bonaventura (1221–1274), the *Stimulus Amoris* (published in English as *The Goad*

> Pierce, most sweet Lord Jesus, my inmost soul with the most joyous and wholesome wound of thy love, with true, serene, and apostolic charity, that my soul may ever languish and melt with love and longing for thee, that it may yearn for thee and faint to dwell in thy courts, and long to be dissolved and to be with thee. Grant that my soul may hunger after thee, the bread of angels, the refreshment of holy souls, our daily and supersubstantial bread, having all sweetness and savor and every delight of taste; let my heart ever hunger after and feed upon thee, upon whom the angels desire to look, and may my inmost soul be filled always with the sweetness of thy savor; may it ever thirst after Thee, the fountain of life, the fountain of wisdom and knowledge, the fountain of eternal light, the torrent of pleasure, the richness of the house of God.[36]

As the century progressed, the size of these painted images of the body of Christ increased and the iconographic emphasis underwent a change.[37] The new mendicant orders had made unprecedented theological headway. In particular, the Franciscans were devoted to the Passion, Cross, and Eucharist. The emphasis on the passion and suffering of Christ, especially promoted by the Franciscans,[38] was an important part of the new understanding of Christ as both human and divine, and essential to the comprehension of the Real Presence.

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of Love) is now attributed to a follower of Bonaventura, the Franciscan friar, Jacopo da Milano, in the latter part of the thirteenth century. See Falk Eisermann, *Stimulus amoris: Inhalt, lateinische Überlieferung, deutsche Übersetzungen, Rezeption* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2001). Many thanks to my colleague, Royal Rhodes, for his helpful bibliographic suggestions on the *Stimulus amoris*.

[36] "Transfige, dulcissime Domine Iesu, medullas animae meae, suavissimo ac saluberrimo vulnere amoris tui. Vulnera viscera animae meae, vera et firma et apostolica caritate: ut vere ardeat, langueat, et liquefiat anima mea solo semper amore et desiderio tui. Concupiscat et deficiat anima in atria tua, cupiat dissolvi et esse tecum. Da ut anima mea te solum semper esuriat panem vitae caelestis, qui de caelo descendisti, panem Angelorum, refectionem animarum sanctarum, panem nostrum quotidianum et supersubstantialem, habentem omnem saporem, et omnem dulcorem, et omne delectamentum suavitatis, in quem desiderant Angeli prospicere. Te semper esuriat, te comedat cor meum, et dulcedine saporis tui repleantur viscera animae meae. Te semper sitiat fontem vitae aeternae, fontem sapientiae, fontem scientiae, fontem aeterni luminis, torrentem voluptatis et ubertatis domus Dei." Fathers of the College of Saint Bonaventura, eds. *Stimulus amoris fr. Iacopo Mediolanensis—Canticum pauperus fr. Ionnis Peckham* (Quaracchi: Collegium Bonaventurae, 1949), pp. vi–xvii.

[37] By the late Dugento, most crosses no longer represented narrative scenes on the apron. Edward Garrison, *Italian Romanesque Panel Painting* (Florence: L.S. Olschki, 1949), pp. 204ff, explains this phenomenon as a result of the demand for crucifixes to be hung at a great height. Thus the image of the Crucified had to stand for the whole sequence.

[38] Rona Goffen, *Spirituality in Conflict: St. Francis and Giotto's Bardi Chapel* (University Park: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), p. 21.

Among others, St. Bonaventure's sermons emphasized Christ's pain and death as essential to the redemption of humankind.[39]

Large painted wood crosses gained momentum in thirteenth-century Italy, becoming almost a requirement for any church in Italy.[40] By the mid Dugento, devotees gazed at the large crosses, which were displayed either suspended from the rafters or fixed to the choir screen. The latter placement is displayed in the scene in the Assisi cycle of the *Verification of the Stigmata of Saint Francis*. (fig. 13.6) In the Italian crucifixes, the intense concentration on the Body increased as the *Christus patiens* type began to dominate. The crucified Christ is shown with eyes closed, head down; he has shed his blood and died his earthly death. Knowledge of the Passion cycle is implicit in this type of cross, since the pious must gaze at the dead Christ, contemplate his suffering and human death, and finally imagine his Resurrection in order to ascertain its true redemptive meaning.

These qualities can be found dramatically in Cimabue's *Crucifix* of the 1280s in Santa Croce, Florence, which emphasizes the humanity of Christ, with its suffering physicality and soft flesh.[41] (fig. 13.7) With this massive cross (about 14.7 ft x 12.8 ft) suspended before them, the pious could contemplate the damage done to the human body of Christ: the sagging abdomen, the painfully stretched shoulders, the nails in hands and feet, and the gaping wound in his side. In this image of the Body of Christ, the Eucharistic meaning of the Mass at the altar, of which the laity could see only a little, became manifest. Immersion in the act of seeing such an image provided a clear parallel to the salvific process enacted in receiving the Host wafer.

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[39] St. Bonaventure, like Francis himself, was devoted to the Passion and emphasized Christ's death and pain, as well as his blood. For a discussion of 15th-century issues regarding the Blood of Christ and the emphasis of Franciscans on Christ's suffering and death as essential to redemption, see Bynum, *Wonderful Blood*, esp. Ch. 5, who cites Bonaventure, *Sermo 2, de nostra redemptione*, in *Opera Omnia*, ed. Collegium S. Bonaventurae (Quaracchi: Collegium S. Bonaventurae, 1882–1902), vol. 9, sect. 5: *Sermones de diversis*, pp. 725–729.

[40] Crosses were created for a variety of churches throughout the centers of artistic production in Italy. For example, we find crosses by Giotto and his workshop from Dominican churches to private chapels.

[41] For a discussion of Cimabue's *Crucifix* in Santa Croce and its restoration see Luciano Bellosi, *Cimabue* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1998).

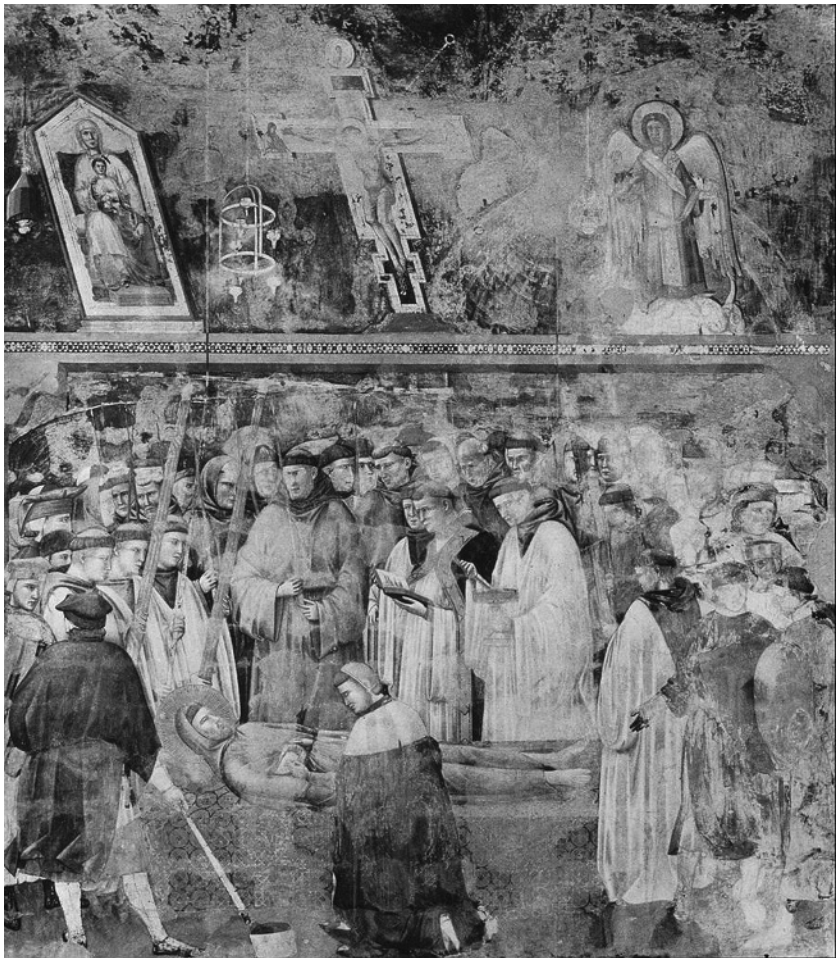

Fig. 13.6 Assisi Master, *Verification of the Stigmata*, fresco, early 14th century (?), 270 × 230 cm, Legend of St. Francis, Upper Church, San Francesco, Assisi. Photo: author.

The Eucharistic Christ in the 14th and 15th Centuries

The *Christus Patiens* crosses, with their contemplative emphasis on blood, suffering and death, had laid the foundation for more specific imagery of the Eucharistic Christ. New Eucharistic images proliferated, especially after the Feast of Corpus Christi became an important public festival and captured popular imagination by the fourteenth

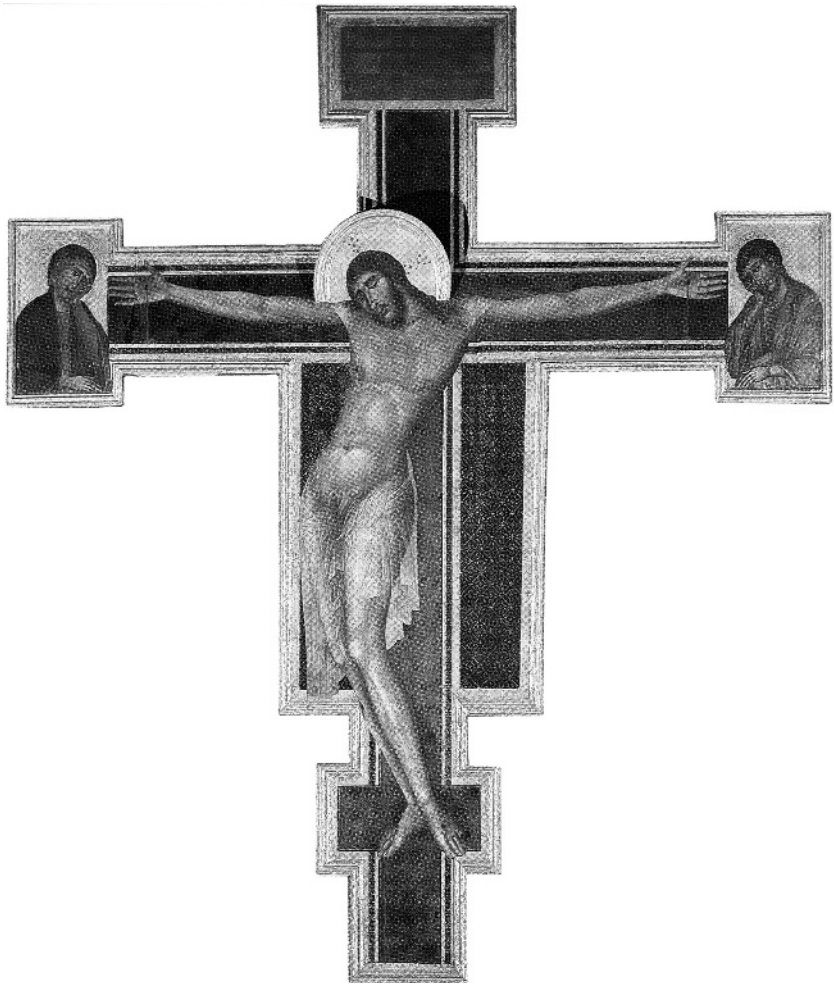

Fig. 13.7 Cimabue, *Crucifix*, panel, 1280s, Museo dell'Opera di Santa Croce, Florence, 448 × 390 cm. (176.4" × 153.5" or 14.7 ft × 12.8 ft.), seen before the 1966 flood. Photo: Bazzechi.

century.[42] Among this multitude of images, which types were most efficacious for spiritual interaction? Not all images met the criteria. Even if subject matter focused on the nature of the Eucharist, the frequently-seen narratives focusing on the Host miracles in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were not always appropriate for spiritual communion. A glaring example can be found in one of the most famous of Eucharistic narratives, Paolo Uccello's *Profanation of the Host* predella (*c.* 1465–68) in Urbino. (fig. 13.8) While it focuses on the blood of Christ flowing from the abused Host wafer, the narrative sequence does not provide the ideal of meditative focus needed for an act such as spiritual communion.[43] A devotional image needs to empty

[42] The feast of the *Corpus Christi* had come to the forefront of Church festivals by the fourteenth century and, even earlier, Eucharistic piety had rapidly attained predominant status. The *Corpus Christi*, or *Corpus Domini* as it was generally called in Italy, was promoted as a feast by the Abbess Juliana of the convent of Mount Cornillon in Liège by 1240; it was established as a feast in the diocese of Liège in 1246. (However, it should be noted that as early as the 1230s there was a ritual at Lüttich that corresponds to the later feast, as established by Urban IV.) Juliana of Liège finally reported to her confessor a vision which she interpreted to mean that the Church was in need of a feast in honor of the blessed Sacrament. The vision was communicated to the Dominicans and to the Bishop of Liège, Robert of Turotte, who in turn reported the idea of a feast to the chancellor of the University of Paris, who did not object to the idea. The Bishop issued a pastoral letter, *Inter alia mira*, to establish the feast in his diocese in October of 1246. For a synopsis of the origins of the feast in France and for further bibliography see Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 164–185. Jacques Pantaleon, the archdeacon of Campines (and a long-time associate of Robert of Turotte), was in the diocese of Liège from 1243–1248; Pantaleon became Pope Urban IV in 1261. For the foundations of the feast in Italy see Fredegand Callaey, "Origine e sviluppo delle festa del 'Corpus Domini'" in *Eucharistia: il mister del'altare nel pensiero e nella vita della chiesa*, ed. Antonio Piolanti (Rome: Desclée, 1957), p. 916. It gained approval in the form of a Papal Bull issued by Urban IV in 1264, *Transiturus*, and in September of that year the pope celebrated the new feast at Orvieto; although many copies of the Bull were made, its widespread dissemination was delayed by Urban's death soon after. For the papal bull see E. Franceschini, "Origine e stile della bolla Transiturus," *Avevum* XXXIX, pp. 218–243. For Eucharistic doubt by the Cathars in Italy see Carol Lansing, *Power and Purity: the Cathar Heresy in Medieval Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 103–105.

[43] Conversely, the altarpiece by Joos van Ghent (aka Joos van Wasenhove) representing the Institution of the Eucharist/Communion of the Apostles, might offer a better opportunity to enact a spiritual communion, since it centers on the relationship between Christ and the Host wafer he proffers to the receiving apostle. Marilyn A. Lavin, "The Altar of the Corpus Domini in Urbino: Paolo Uccello, Joos van Ghent, Piero della Francesca," *Art Bulletin* 49 (1967), pp. 1–24, discusses the iconography and the circumstances of the commission of both the predella and the altarpiece by Urbino's confraternity of the Corpus Christi. See also Miri Rubin, *Gentile Tales: the Narrative Assault on Late Medieval Jews* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 1–6, 40–49.

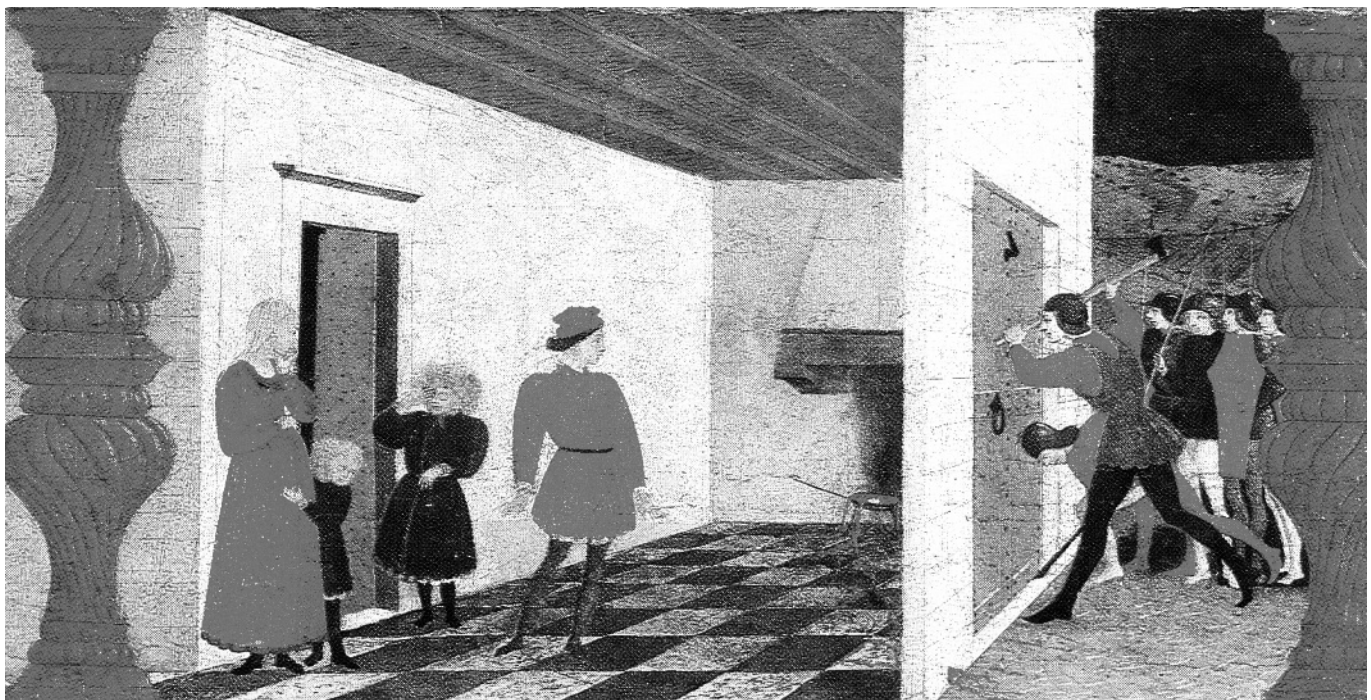

Fig. 13.8 Paolo Uccello, detail, *Profanation of the Host*, predella, 1465–69, tempera on panel, 43 × 58 cm (16.9 × 22.8 in.), Galleria Nazionale delle Marche, Urbino. Photo: Zenodot Verlagsgesellschaft mbH licensed under the GNU Free Documentation License.

itself of other contexts, and requires a certain amount of dignity and visual center to encourage quiet contemplation.[44]

In the Trecento, discussion of the visible signs of the Eucharist—the bread and wine—had reached greater theological accord. Franciscan thought, exemplified by Bonaventura and John Duns Scotus, was synthesized with Dominican thought, exemplified by Albertus Magnus and Thomas Aquinas. Two essential ideas had been part of earlier discussions; frequent points of disagreement were reiterated and integrated.[45] First, the relationship between the risen Lord and the recipient was determined by intention and faith. Second, the metaphysical relationship between the accidents of the bread and wine and the substance of the Body and Blood was not determined by intention and faith, but existed regardless of the identity or intention of the recipient. Although the metaphysical presence of the Lord in the signs was viewed as unconditional, in order to effect the saving power it was necessary for the recipient to understand and have faith in the Sacrament.[46] Thus the sacramental character of the Eucharist—its nature as a sign—was essential to the theology of the Eucharist and the most important ingredient in salvation. In the most common view, to take the Eucharist without the required faith would be equivalent only

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[44] Sixten Ringbom, *From Icon to Narrative: the Rise of the Dramatic Close-up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting*, 2nd ed. (Doornspijk, The Netherlands: Davaco, 1984).

[45] Macy, "Reception of the Eucharist," pp. 15–36, has traced the threads of the complex arguments involving reception. Reception of the Eucharist by non-Christians, unworthy or underage Christians, and animals (mice play a particularly stellar role), are all topics for theological discussion. In addition, the concepts of substance, visible signs, and accidents play a part in the lack of a standard belief. Ideas regarding the visible signs are especially important to this study because of the new emphasis on the Host embodied in Eucharistic imagery and Host tabernacles in the late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance.

[46] Many discussions among theologians ensued regarding the faith necessary for reception of the Eucharist. Inevitably, for example, crumbs of Host wafers would be dropped from the altar despite all efforts toward protection. If mice then ate those crumbs from the consecrated Host would they have received the Body of Christ? The answer varied among theologians. In the 13th century Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure took opposing views, with the Franciscan asserting that pious ears should refuse to listen to the idea that the Body of Christ is in the stomach of a mouse. Mice (and other animals) would have neither the necessary faith nor understanding. See Enrico Mazza, *Celebration of the Eucharist: the Origin of the Rite and the Development of its Interpretation.* Trans. M.J. O'Connell (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), pp. 220–221. See also Macy, "Of Mice and Manna: *Quid mus sumit* as a Pastoral Question," *Recherches téologie anciénne et médiévale* 58 (1991), pp. 157–166, esp. p. 159.

to eating the accidents of bread and wine.[47] So too, would spiritual reception require the actor/recipient to have undergone the necessary steps to attain intention and faith.[48]

By the late fourteenth-century new imagery emerged that further emphasized the vulnerability of Christ's body, and his redemptive sacrifice. Giovanno da Milano's pietistic painting of about 1365,[49] (fig. 13.9) startles us with a clear directive from the Virgin, who not only shows us the wound in her son's side, but also demonstrates his corporeality by delicately, but firmly, pressing on it with three fingertips.[50] Mary Magdalen on the other side of Christ, does not look out at the viewer, but remains rapt in her contemplation of the Body. The Virgin thus guides the viewer to the wound and the blood pouring out, while the Magdalen, the archetypal sinner, focuses on his body, leading pious viewers to this means of understanding Christ as the way to salvation. Both the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalen, despite their human grief, provide models of Eucharistic interaction with the body of Christ.

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[47] Nicholas of Lyra (d. 1349), a Franciscan exegete, wrote a short work on the conditions necessary for worthy reception of the Eucharist, mainly relying on the discussion of his Franciscan predecessors. Macy, *Reception of the Eucharist*, pp, 33–35. Nicholas enumerated twelve requirements for a worthy reception: one must be human, still living, a believer, an adult, mentally competent, fasting devotedly, without awareness of mortal sin, not guilty of notorious crimes, have a clean body, not prohibited by the appearance of a miracle, have a proper minister, and have the right intention. However, Nicholas diverges from Bonaventura's assertion that the presence ceases when animals receive and argues for the endurance of the real presence of the Body and Blood, despite the fate of the Species. He incorporates this Dominican theological point of view, formulated by Aquinas, into his otherwise Franciscan views. Macy, p. 35, discusses a similar integration of Franciscan Eucharistic ideas into the theology of the Dominicans. Durandus of Saint-Pourçian believed that "only humans have the capacity and necessity of using temporal signs to reveal veiled spiritual realities, and as the Eucharist functions in just such a way, only humans are capable of reception.…Only humans who understand this sign are able to receive it as it is meant to be received. Others receive only the accidents of the bread and wine." Like Aquinas, Durandus argued that the Body and Blood remain under the accidents as long as they are recognizable as bread and wine.

[48] Macy, *Theologies of the Eucharist*, p. 47.

[49] Daniela Parenti, *Giovanni da Milano: capolavori del gotico fra Lombardia e Toscana*. (Florence: Giunti: Firenze Musei, 2008).

[50] My thanks go to Sarah Blick for pointing out a possible reference to the Trinity in this motif. If so, it would also underscore the long-standing association between the Eucharist and the Trinity. Hans Belting in his sweeping study, *Likeness and Presence: a History of the Image Before the Era of Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), pp. 354–355, discusses the invention of two new types of images in the west, the Madonna of Mercy and the Pietà, stating that although the latter derived from Byzantine icons, both "…take on a narrative aspect and guide contemplation toward a particular content, a particular idea, instead of toward a person."

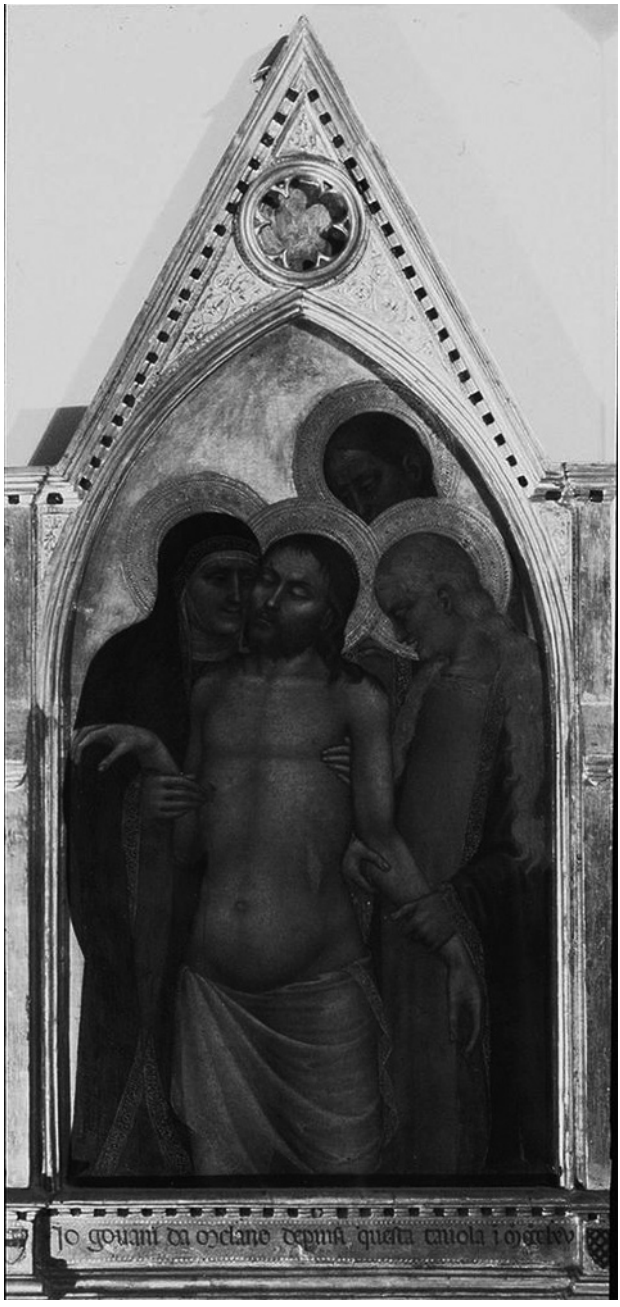

Fig. 13.9 Giovanni da Milano, *Pietà*, 1365, tempera on panel, Galleria dell'Accademia, Florence, 110 × 46 cm (43.3 × 18.1 in). Photo: author.

Placing the figures clustered together on the picture plane eliminates the distance between painting and viewer, creating a close identification with their contemplation of Christ's Eucharistic body. Like the Virgin and the Magdalen, we want to touch the Body, and the artist, through the intimate intertwining of hands and arms, allows us to sense how it would feel in a visceral way.

The theological consensus regarding the salvific effects of the Eucharist achieved only through faith and understanding of the Sacrament, corresponds to an important method enabling the faithful to bypass the clergy in their union with the risen Christ. As we have seen, "spiritual reception" was an alternative form of communion in the Middle Ages, and continued in significance throughout the fifteenth century.[51] Not only do the origins of this mode of communion correspond with the development of painted crosses, monstrances, and the popularization of the feast of the *Corpus Christi*, it clarifies the growing emphasis on sculpted cupboards for the Eucharist.

In Northern Europe as well as in Italy, numerous Eucharistic miracles had been venerated and encased as relics by the end of the fourteenth century, and pilgrimage sites devoted to them were widespread—both in Northern Europe and in Italy.[52] In fact, richly embellished reliquaries and chapels in which to contain them, had become the norm in the case of Eucharistic miracles. Nonetheless, some theologians had difficulty reconciling orthodox views with this overtly physical way of explaining transubstantiation. Miracle hosts tended to focus attention on the relics and take attention away from the Eucharistic presence in each and every Christian church.[53]

While not universally rejecting Eucharistic miracles and their cults, theologians sought to clarify the liturgical Eucharist as opposed to specific miracle relics. This development should be seen as part of a complex desire to behold, comprehend, and commune with the Body of the Lord—to truly perceive the Eucharist. The need for explicit and orthodox Eucharistic imagery was manifest because of the fervent and

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[51] Dating back to the Victorines, the practice grew up of performing some devotional act in the place of actually receiving the Host. For the practice in the twelfth century, see Macy, *Theologies of the Eucharist*, pp. 93–95.

[52] Snoek, *Medieval Piety*, passim.

[53] For the prevalence of Blood miracle shrines in the north by the fifteenth century century, see Achim Timmermann, *Staging the Eucharist: Late Gothic Sacrament Houses of Swabia and on the Upper Rhine, Architecture and Iconography* (Ph.D. diss., University of London, 1996).

sometimes inappropriate attention paid to the relics. In addition, the call for frequent communion was common in the fifteenth century.[54] Redirecting awareness of the consecrated Host in churches could be achieved in part by emphasizing their containers: increasing their size and using images with established significance. The newly developed cupboards could serve two purposes: first, that of preservation of the consecreated Host and, second, a type of artistic ostension in the form of unambiguous and orthodox Eucharistic imagery, helping the pious more completely envision the contents and thus achieve communion with Christ.

By the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries churches in Italy began to commission more elaborate Host tabernacles, distinct from the reliquary/altars of Host miracles (perhaps taking their cue from the large miracle shrines). Safe keeping of the consecrated Host for communion had been a concern since at least the 1215 Lateran Council, and had been kept in churches in a variety of containers.[55] Tabernacles for the consecrated Host could take the form of a wall cupboards or free-standing ciboria. Traditionally, most were small and had little in the way of figural sculpture or explicit symbols to denote the sacred contents. However, we begin to see a tentative emergence of slightly larger, sculpturally enriched wall tabernacles in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century in Tuscany.[56] Corresponding to theological

[54] Such diverse figures as the German mystic, Meister Eckhart, the Tuscan preacher Bernardino da Siena, and theologian Nicholas of Cusa were advocates of regular lay communion.

[55] Ecclesiastical legislation regarding the housing of the holy of holies had been clear about the need for clean, safe, and respectful reservation for consecrated Hosts, but synodal decrees were not clear about the specific location or type of container for the Host. Small cupboards in which a pyx could be placed were fairly common, as were independent pyxes (sometimes in the shape of doves) suspended over an altar. For an overview of Eucharistic reservation prior to the Quattrocento, see Felix Raible, *Der Tabernakel einst und jetzt* (Freiberg im Breisgau: Herder, 1908); E. Maffei, *La réservation eucharistique jusqu'à la Renaissance* (Brussels: Vromant, 1942), and Joseph Braun, *Der christliche Altar in seiner geschichtlichen Entwicklung*, 2 vols. (Munich: Guenther Koch, 1924). The lack of uniform reservation resulted in a long-standing liturgical dilemma, and the resolution was not to come until Counter-Reformation legislation mandated a single location.

[56] In the sacristy of the Cathedral of Siena, for example, one finds a wall tabernacle enhanced by its resemblance to a church portal, its iconography enriched by the inclusion of saints Peter and Paul to either side of the doorway. The *sportello* of this tabernacle, like so many others, has been removed. The tabernacle is used now as a Holy Oil receptacle, like the conversion of many tabernacles after the edicts of the sixteenth-century councils. For a discussion of the changes made by the Councils, see Caspary, *Das Sakramentstabernakel in Italien bis zum Konzil von Trient: Gestalt,*

reemphasis on the "ordinary" Host and more frequent communion, tabernacles of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century in Italy had an expanded iconography with a number of important, newly visualized associations; one of the most potent of these concerned the motherhood of the Virgin Mary. The Virgin at this moment of Incarnation was intimately associated with her role as a tabernacle of Christ.[57] However, while the Annunciation has an imbedded Eucharistic meaning in that it refers to the Incarnation of Christ–the Word Made Flesh[58]—it is not as explicit as the numerous tales of the Eucharist created for lay consumption. However, although the Annunciation was not as explicit a sign of the Eucharist, another feature, a half-length Man-of-Sorrows which fills the lunette has greater clarity. Adapted particularly from Trecento tomb imagery as a reference to Christ's redemptive sacrifice,[59] this type of Man of Sorrows became a com-

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Ikonographie und Symbolik, kultische Funktion (Munich: Uni-Druck, 1964), pp. 10ff. No documents exist referring to the tabernacle, nor can it be dated with any precision. Anne Markham Schulz, The Sculpture of *Bernardo Rossellino and His Workshop* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), p. 53, dates this tabernacle to "shortly after 1400." Schulz, p. 53, n. 7, mentions early wall tabernacles in Feltre, Florence, Vicenza, Castiglione d'Olona, Treviso, Rome, and Fiesole. Gothic architectural features are characteristic of the era and can be found in a number of wall tabernacles.

[57] For the tradition of the Virgin's womb equated with a tabernacle, see for example, Durandus, *Rationale*, Book 1, Articles 37–38.

[58] I believe that these Sienese tabernacles may have an important precedent in the reliquary for the miraculous Corporal in Orvieto. The Orvieto reliquary was created in 1337 by a Sienese artist, Ugolino dei Vieri; emulating the tripartite facade and portal of a Gothic church, its enamel narrative decoration includes an *Annunciation* to either side of its small door in the upper story. These two tabernacles are casts of marble tabernacles from the late Trecento in the church of S. Eugenio, Villa di Monastero, Siena. One has a later inscription designating it as a container for Holy oil. See Schulz, *Bernardo Rossellino*, p. 53, n. 7.

[59] A similar marble wall tabernacle in the Duomo in Montepulciano, currently is immured to the right of the high altar. Although the niches to either side of the doorway are now empty (there are marks where the figures were originally attached), a recessed half-length Man of Sorrows remains above the *sportello*. (The *sportello* is later, of gilded wood, and is inscribed "sacra olea" to denote its later usage.) James Beck, *Jacopo della Quercia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 199 mentions the Sienese tabernacle from Sant'Eugenio a Monastero (and notes that the church currently owns only a gesso cast; the original was sold earlier in the 20th century). After examining the original tabernacle, Beck dated it to the second decade of the fifteenth century. He believes that the half-length Man of Sorrows is essentially Quattrocento in form. It does indeed appear commonly on Renaissance tabernacles, but the image can be found earlier on Trecento tombs, such as that of Tedice Aliotti in Santa Maria Novella, Florence.

mon element on most Quattrocento tabernacles, along with a variety of other specific references to the Eucharistic contents.[60]

Luca della Robbia's 1441–1442 tabernacle for Sant'Egidio (fig. 13.10) is among the first wave of Italian wall tabernacles of the new type—much larger (about 8 ½ ft. high by 4 ft. wide), enhanced with a classical architectonic frame, and displaying clear Eucharistic imagery including the Man of Sorrows motif in its lunette.[61] The tabernacle was made for the Capella Maggiore of the small hospital church of Sant'Egidio, Florence (Santa Maria Nuova), dedicated to St. Luke; because of its liturgical function as a cupboard for the holy of holies, it was by definition positioned to be easily accessed. Moreover, it would have been quite large in its space and easily visible due to its size and polychrome effects. In Luca's marble relief, as in Giovanni da Milano's earlier panel painting, the curving three-quarter length image of the Pietà appears in the context of the Sacrament tabernacle. Christ is flanked by two figures, the Virgin Mary to the left and John the Evangelist to the right; an angel holds the Body aloft. Again, the Virgin points to her son, and the meaning of his suffering, and John the Evangelist, in profile, contemplates the Body. The vertical axis of the tabernacle emphasizes the Trinity, with God the Father in the gable above, the Eucharistic Christ in the lunette, and the dove of the Holy Spirit descending toward the door to the Host. In the center

[60] In one of the Sienese tabernacles, the steeply pointed Gothic gable contains a half-length figure of God the Father, holding a book in his left hand and blessing with his right hand. The figure of God the Father is another form frequently represented in the upper story of fifteenth-century wall tabernacles.

[61] This tabernacle was created for the Cappella Maggiore of the church of Sant'Egidio. The documents for payment to Luca della Robbia published by Allan Marquand, *Luca della Robbia* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1914), p. 65, show that the tabernacle was placed in the chapel of St. Luke, the choir of the church of Sant'Egidio. The documents state that the payments are for, "Parte d'un tabernacolo di marmo per tenere il chorpo di Christo nella cappella di Santolucha." Archivio del R. Arcispedale di S. Maria Nuova in Firenze. For further discussion see John Pope-Hennessy, *Luca della Robbia*, pp. 33–35, 134. Bernardo's and Luca's tabernacles have been frequently confused, especially because both were made for the hospital complex of Santa Maria Nuova and Bernardo's monument was eventually moved to Sant' Egidio. There are no documents regarding the transfer of Luca's tabernacle to Peretola, but some scholars believe it was moved there in the eighteenth century (see Schulz, *Bernardo Rossellino*, p. 53). The genesis of the vivid polychromy of the enameled terracotta ornament has been connected by Pope-Hennessy, *Luca della Robbia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), pp. 33–35, 134 to Domenico Veneziano's 1439 fresco commission for the same chapel. Andrew Butterfield, *The Sculptures of Andrea Verrocchio* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), p. 221, attributes the bronze door to Verrocchio, and asserts that the dove also appears to have been a replacement by Verrocchio.

Fig. 13.10 Luca della Robbia, *Sacrament Tabernacle*, from Sant'Egidio, Florence, now in Santa Maria a Peretola outside Florence, marble and glazed terracotta, *c.* 1442. 2.60 × 1.22 m. (about 8.5 × 4 ft). Photo: author.

of the tabernacle, large full-length standing angels flank the door to the Host. The devout viewing this unprecedented richness of imagery would find much to contemplate: the mystical association of the Trinity with the Eucharist, the Body of Christ offered by his mother, and the devotional example of the angels flanking the doorway to the Host.[62] The impact of the large sculpted monument, with its near-life size figures, promotes an understanding of the sacramental contents, and could provide lay viewers an ideal focal point to achieve spiritual communion. Without distraction, one could contemplate the mystical relationship of the Trinity to the Eucharist, the suffering of the human Christ, the transcendence of the body into the transubstantiative means of salvation, present in the contents of the tabernacle.

Increasingly, Host tabernacles featured a more complex set of visual and conceptual associations. In the late fourteenth and early fifteenth century, enlarged tabernacles with explicit imagery enabled the faithful to make a spiritual communion at any time without a priest, without attendance at the altar proper, and even without the Host wafer visible. Theologians and preachers in the Quattrocento called for increased lay communion, and the new tabernacles to hold the Eucharist could help direct attention to the Real Presence of Christ in the church and emphasize the need for more consistent participation in the salvific effects of the Body of Christ. A variety of new images evoked the sense of Christ's corporality, and a variety of analogies were indicated—the chalice and host were paralleled to the Man of Sorrows, or to the Infant Christ who, in Desiderio da Settignano's tabernacle in San Lorenzo (1464), stands in a chalice. (fig. 13.11) In fact, the Eucharistic Christ was represented in more than one way on this altar—a relief of the Pietà (fig. 13.12) was incorporated into the ensemble. This tabernacle was intended as more than a simple Host receptacle; instead, it was part of an altar—perhaps even the High Altar of San Lorenzo.[63] The

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[62] One of the features of the enlarged tabernacles of the fifteenth century seems to have been kneeling slabs for prayer. For example, one of the few remaining parts to Brunelleschi's lost tabernacle for Campo Corbellini are a well-worn pair of these kneeling stones. The documents were published by A. Parronchi, "Un tabernacolo brunelleschiano," *Filippo Brunelleschi—La sua opera el il suo tempo* (Covegno Internazionale di studi, Florence, October, 1977) (Florence: Centro Di, 1980), pp. 240–241.

[63] Irving Lavin, "Donatello's Bronze Pulpits in San Lorenzo and the Early Christian Revival" in *Past/Present. Essays on Historicism in Art from Donatello to Picasso* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), pp. 1–27, believes it was part of a complex design for the high altar. For possible reconstructions of the original form of the tabernacle, see Ida Cardellini, "Desiderio e il tabernacolo di San Lorenzo," *Critica*

Fig. 13.11 Desiderio da Settignano, *Sacrament Tabernacle*, 1461, marble, San Lorenzo, Florence. Photo: Alinari/Art Resource.

Fig. 13.12 Desiderio da Settignano, detail, *Pietà*, from Sacrament tabernacle, San Lorenzo, Florence, *c.* 1464. Photo: Alinari/Art Resource.

focus of this altar was explicitly envisaged as that of Christ's body in the Eucharist, and the image was large enough to be seen from afar. While there were many precedents of the Pietà on Host tabernacles by 1461, the life-size image of the infant Christ (fig. 13.13) was an inventive way to visually connect this tabernacle to traditional Eucharistic narratives. Desiderio, with a highly charged three-dimensional realism, created the viewer's interactive visual experience anew using an

d'arte 3 (1956), pp. 68–75; *idem*, *Desiderio da Settignano. Studi e documenti di storia dell'arte*, vol. 3 (Milan: Edizioni di Communità, 1962). See also Alessandro Parronchi, "Sulla collocazione originario del tabernacolo di Desiderio da Settignano," *Cronache di archeologia e di storia di arte* 4 (1965), pp. 130–140 and *idem*, "Un tabernacolo brunelleschiano," pp. 244–245.

Fig. 13.13 Desiderio da Settignano, detail, *Christ Child* from Sacrament tabernacle, San Lorenzo, Florence. Photo: Alinari/Art Resource.

old theme. Moreover, the Child was removable and was placed on the altar at Christmas, in addition to other uses.[64]

The Child standing in the chalice at the top related to long-standing Eucharistic tales in which the Host wafer was mystically transformed into a child, either on the altar or in the hands of the priest during Mass.[65] Many of these stories were the result of a vision in which the

[64] According to Vasari, *Le Vite de' piú eccellenti architetti, pittori, et scultori italiani*, eds. Luciano Bellosi and Aldo Rossi (Turin: G. Einaudi, 1986), p. 419 Desiderio's figure was deposited in the sacristy, to be used on the altar at Christmas. Otto Kurz, "A Group of Florentine Drawings for an Altar," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* XVIII (1955), pp. 35–53 also discusses the infant Christ of the tabernacle, as a revered object used not only on the altar at Christmas, but carried in Savonarola's procession for the burning of the vanities in 1497.

[65] This is the case in the Chapel of the Corporal in Orvieto, where one of the frescoed sequences focusing on Eucharistic miracles, displays first the defeat and conversion of the Saracens and then, in the adjoining scene, a priest at the moment of the elevation of the Host holding a small child instead of the Host wafer, Kurz, "A Group of Florentine Drawings for an Altar," p. 48, relates Desiderio's Child at the

viewer, either pious or doubting, would see a small child instead of the Host wafer. In the didactic tales, the faithful would sometimes see the priest breaking not the host wafer for ingestion, but tearing the child limb from limb—a graphic popular vision of transubstantiation.[66] Thus Desiderio's sculpture derives from a long line of explicit Eucharistic visions that deal with the act of communion. What better way to signal to the pious that the act of focused concentration could achieve a direct interaction with the Eucharistic Christ? It is particularly potent here because this beautiful sculpture, with its three-dimensionality manifesting a physical reality beyond that of earlier images of the theme, would seem, in the flickering light of the large candles required for the illumination of the Eucharist,[67] to truly be Christ incarnate. Desiderio connects with the viewer by using an adorable, perfect child, which despite its idealism convinces us of its reality. Like his contemporaries, the artist uses fundamental universal human experience—the charming toddler smiling down at us—to pull the viewer into an understanding of the Eucharist. In a process similar to a neo-Platonic ascent, all its features lead us step by step from the physical to the supernatural: first we smile at a playful child in all his human physicality, then we notice his placement on the paten atop the chalice, which leads us to think of the common tales of the manifestation of the Christ Child on the altar, to the role of the incarnation of Christ as the way to salvation, and finally to our ability to obtain salvation through worthy reception of the Body of Christ in the Eucharist. Thus full comprehension of Desiderio's image of the Eucharistic Child atop the chalice must be arrived at by such a process, with the viewer contemplating the reality of the Host as the Incarnate Christ and feeling

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apex of the tabernacle to the iconography of the German "Sakramentsmüle" (mill of the Sacrament), an allegory based on the words, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:35). He reproduces a German manuscript which represents from top to bottom: the Annunciation, the four Evangelists placing their gospels into a mill and, finally, the Eucharist emerging from the mill in the form of the infant Christ in a chalice.

[66] Leah Sinanoglou, "The Christ Child as Sacrifice: A Medieval Tradition and the Corpus Christi Plays," *Speculum* XLVIII (1973), pp. 491ff. discusses a variety of these miracles. "In one of the most bizarre, yet very common miracles of the Middle Ages, the bread of the Eucharist is transformed between the very hands of the priest at Mass into a small living child, then slain and dismembered before the eyes of the congregation. Commentators identified the child as the Infant Jesus and often cited such miracles as proof that the Mass is an actual re-sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ." Sinanoglou's concern is English Corpus Christi drama, but much of the material she uses comes from widely distributed Latin tracts.

[67] For the candles and other requirements regarding the Eucharistic ritual see Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 59–63.

sympathy through identification with a sense of parental protection—as if one were Mary herself knowing the fate of her divine Child.

Though the goal might be similar, the intellectual process involved in intense spiritual interaction with other kinds of Eucharistic imagery was distinctly different than that of the infant Christ. The Standing Redeemer arrived as perhaps the most explicit of the Quattrocento images that lent themselves to contemplation and the resulting spiritual interaction. Standing alone, and immediately clear in their meaning to the viewer accustomed to the preaching about Eucharistic devotion, these images focus on the full-length figure of Christ bleeding into a chalice. They are related to the Man of Sorrows (fig. 13.14) and also draw from narrative imagery, including that of Host miracles, especially the explicit fifteenth-century versions of the miraculous *Mass of St. Gregory*. (fig. 13.3) In some senses they incorporate both types of earlier painted crosses—the *Christus Patiens* (fig. 13.7) and the *Christus Triumphans*, (fig. 13.4) in the dual focus on the pitiful wounds on Christ's vulnerable body and his miraculous state of living death.

Among these images, none is more potent than that of Giovanni Bellini,[68] (fig. 13.15) who renders the standing Redeemer, wounds displayed, in a perspectival setting. Different types of pietistic images may have provided some impetus for this type in their contemplative emphasis on the suffering of Christ—it comes in a long line of Eucharistic images of Christ and is related to both the Man of Sorrows and the Christ figure of the Quattrocento Gregory Mass. Still, the Standing Redeemer differs by degrees—while a Pietà can be seen more directly as a moment isolated from a specific part of the Passion narrative, albeit imagined, the standing Redeemer is reminiscent of many scenes simultaneously. In a single image the viewer can imagine Christ on the Cross, with angels catching his blood as it is spilled, the Resurrected Christ on the road to Emmaus, or the risen Christ poked in the side by his skeptical apostle, Thomas. It is even more specific in its Eucharistic connotations because not only can we contemplate the signs of his suffering, but the miracle of transubstantiation is pulled front and center. Because of its scale and subject matter, some scholars have hypothesized that Bellini's image was intended originally as the

[68] This and related Eucharistic images are discussed by Rona Goffen, *Giovanni Bellini* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), esp. pp. 79–83.

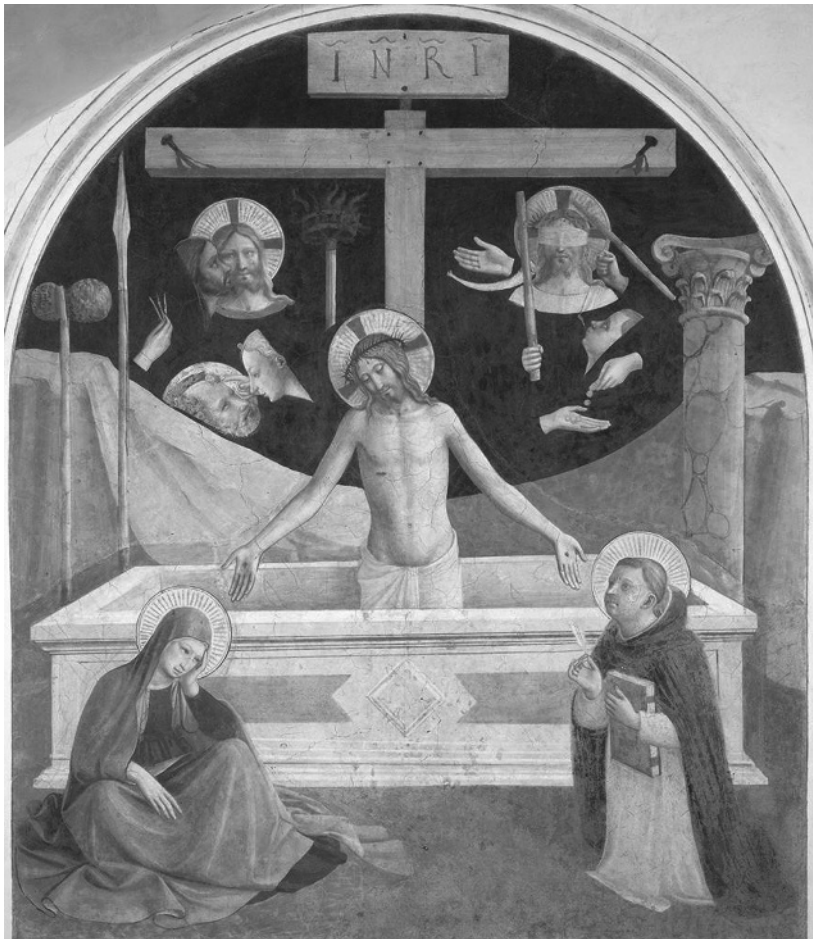

Fig. 13.14 Fra Angelico, *Man of Sorrows*, *c*. 1440–41, fresco, cell 26, San Marco, Florence. Photo: author.

door to a Host tabernacle;[69] and indeed, in the later fifteenth century and early sixteenth century, the Standing Redeemer was used frequently for that purpose.[70] The Standing Redeemer type differs from

[69] Goffen, *ibid*., p. 82

[70] See, for example, the early 16th-century bronze *sportello* on Luca della Robbia's Sacrament tabernacle in Peretola. There is no record of the original door to this tabernacle, or what (if anything) it may have represented. However, if Butterfield, *Sculptures of Verrocchio*, p. 221, is correct in assuming that both the door and bronze dove were replaced by Verrocchio, the Standing Redeemer may have been represented on the original sportello as well.

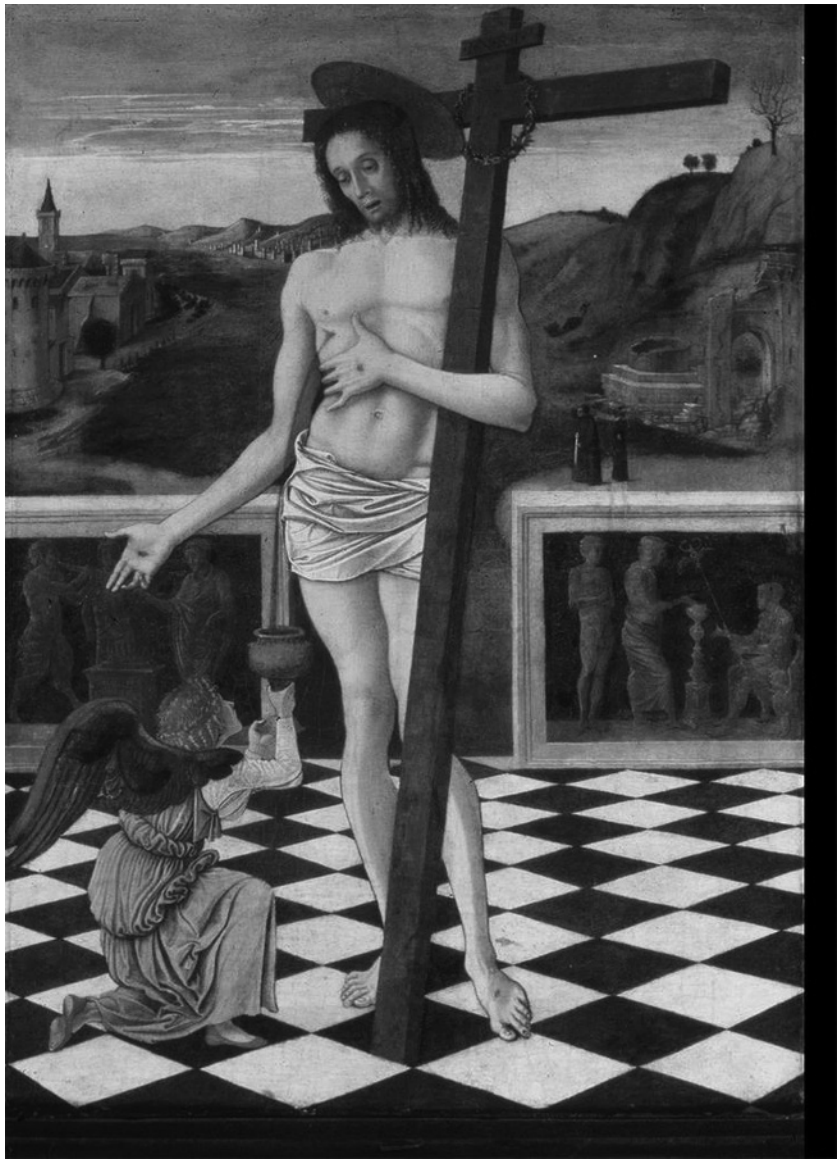

Fig. 13.15 Giovanni Bellini, *Blood of the Redeemer*, *c.* 1460–65, National Gallery of Art, London, egg tempera on poplar, 47 × 34.3 cm. (8 ½ × 13 ½ in). Photo: National Gallery of Art.

narrative images by consolidating those ideas for devotional contemplation, guiding the viewer to an understanding of transubstantiation; its placement on tabernacle doors creates an ideal focal point for spiritual communion.

Conclusion

This study has looked at a few of the many types of Eucharistic images available to the laity in the late Middle Ages and Early Renaissance in Italy. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, images of all varieties proliferated to engage contemplative focus on the Eucharist. The Pietà continued to flourish in Italy in many forms,[71] as did images of the Infant Christ and the full-length Christ bleeding into a chalice. Some of those images had multiple purposes, allowing the viewer to contemplate the suffering of Christ in a visceral way, guiding them to penitent thoughts or facilitating ocular or spiritual communion. Others had explicit meaning, leading inexorably to close interaction with the idea of the Host of the Mass.

The most important way in which the laity could interact with the Eucharist, ingestion of the Sacrament, theoretically provided the ultimate physical contact with the divine. Paradoxically, the Host wafer while physical in one sense, required enormous effort of imagination to perceive as the body and blood of Christ. Seeing the Host became an essential aspect of devotion to the Eucharist, but seeing a small wheaten wafer at a distance was challenging at best. Visual art played an important role in making the host real. Moreover, not only was this wheaten wafer conceptually abstract even in the most obvious corporeal terms, but its complex nature was not readily understood, since the theology emphasized its spiritual rather than physical nature. With mendicant emphasis on the suffering of Christ in the Passion in the thirteenth century and the early painted crosses suspended on the choir screens for all to see, the devout were able to easily envision the

[71] The differences between the standing Redeemer type and the various forms of *Pietà* can be illustrated by comparing one of Bellini's own numerous images of the Pietà. Like Giovanni da Milano's version of a century earlier, many of the later Pietà images focus on private contemplation, rather than the Mass-oriented public sculpture found on Desiderio's tabernacle in San Lorenzo.

parallel between the raising of the Host and the Body of Christ on the cross.

Correspondingly, in the following century Eucharistic relics provided much-needed relief from such abstraction, often emphasizing a bleeding Host wafer, or miraculous survival of the Host from all manner of assault. Bloody relics were compelling to look at and made it far easier to envision the suffering body of Christ, and these relics, along with their containers and explicating art, brought an ethereal idea one step closer to reality, and thus provided a parallel to the familiar relics of saints. They furnished a physical manifestation of the Eucharist, howsoever inaccurate theologically. Nonetheless, unlike saints' relics, which are in substance the physical remnants of holy personages, the Eucharist is a sign and as such is metaphysical. The need for differentiation of the central Sacrament of the Church and orthodox worship of the Eucharist became increasingly apparent to theologians in the fifteenth century, and the Real Presence in the form of the Host wafer was newly emphasized in liturgical art.

Painted and sculpted representations in a variety of forms over a wide time span enabled lay worshippers to visualize the Sacrifice of the redemptive Christ in the Host, and thus gave greater meaning to the ingestion of the Host wafer in the physical act of communion. Both public and private images also created a more explicit focus for the intimate interaction of spiritual communion, which could be enacted at any time without the mediation of a priest. Eucharistic art made the pure conceptual theology seem tangible and, in turn, the tangible but visually lackluster Host wafer was made understandable as a theological concept. Art of the Eucharist offered the visual means to trump mere relics, no matter how physically accessible, and facilitated the ultimate human contact with the divine.

14. EMPATHETIC IMAGES AND PAINTED DIALOGUES: THE VISUAL AND VERBAL RHETORIC OF ROYAL PRIVATE PIETY IN RENAISSANCE SPAIN

Juan Luis González García

My paper will analyze the uses of meditative images in Renaissance Spain, with particular reference to court culture. Through a survey of devotional paintings and manuscripts owned by Isabella the Catholic (1451–1504), Charles V (1500–1558) and Philip II (1527–1598), I will examine their functions as a focus for spiritual contemplation by exploring their relationships to contemporaneous texts on ecclesiastical oratory and spirituality. This essay's central theme will be an examination of how these images were engaged in an abstract perceptual process which employed mnemonic techniques as an empathetic stimulus for devotion. Through this approach a critical rethinking of works by Hans Memling, Juan de Flandes, Hieronymus Bosch, and Titian, among others, will be undertaken.*

Public magnificence and private devotion in the Spanish court at the turn of 1500

At least until the mid-sixteenth century, jewelry, gold and silverware, tapestries, textiles and furniture prevailed over paintings and sculptures among Spanish royal inventories. Broadly speaking, the role bestowed on art throughout the Trastamaras' and the Habsburgs' inventories was not mainly built around aesthetic enjoyment, but it does reveal a

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modern sense of court life as a place where power was manifested by means of splendor and magnificence. According to Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, "Magnificence" was a virtue pertaining to wealth but, unlike generosity, it was confined to expenditures involving the use of money, and was concerned only with spending on a grand scale. Thus, the magnificent man or woman had the capacity to judge what was needed and suitable, and to spend large sums of money with good taste.[1] In late medieval Spain, the idea of magnificence received its most robust artistic expression in the collecting and patronage of Isabella of Castile, much wider and better known than that of her husband, Ferdinand II of Aragon (1452–1516).[2]

Despite a fairly extensive literature on the objects that once belonged to Isabella,[3] however, both the complexity and inaccuracy of the inventorial references,[4] together with the relatively few items that have reached us—mainly preserved in the Royal Chapel of Granada, a place which assembles most of the extant devotional panels collected by the Catholic Queen—prevent us from establishing a corpus of her collections, something definitely easier to do with her successors. Furthermore, it is impossible to ascertain how many paintings or manuscripts dated before Isabella I's accession (1474) were inherited from her father John II (1405–1454) or her brother Henry IV (1425–1474), who preceded her on the Spanish throne, or were acquired either by purchase or donation. And with regard to those composed during her reign, in most cases it cannot be determined whether they were purchased, donated or made on behalf of the queen. But even with these shortcomings, the analysis of available documentation will allow us to draw some conclusions about the contents of her collection and the function she conferred upon religious artworks, whose fate in the Habsburgs' inventories will also be essential for determin-

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[1] Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 1.9.2, trans. William Rhys Roberts (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), p. 29.

[2] See Fernando Checa Cremades, "Poder y piedad: patronos y mecenas en la introducción del Renacimiento en España," in *Reyes y mecenas. Los Reyes Católicos—Maximiliano I y los inicios de la Casa de Austria en España* (Toledo: Electa, 1992), pp. 21–54.

[3] See Rafael Domíguez Casas, "The Artistic Patronage of Isabel the Catholic: Medieval or Modern?" in *Queen Isabel I of Castile: Power, Patronage, Persona*, ed. Barbara F. Weissberger (London: Tamesis Books, 2008), pp. 123–48, with bibliography.

[4] On Isabella the Catholic's bulky, yet fragmentary inventories, see Antonio de la Torre y del Cerro, ed., *Testamentaría de Isabel la Católica* (Valladolid: Instituto "Isabel la Católica" de Historia Eclesiástica, 1968).

ing a valuation of Queen Isabella as a committed user (and donor)[5] of devotional images.

Since the late Middle Ages, the veneration of images within the domestic sphere had developed as a new form of extraliturgical participation in church life.[6] The concern of the individual to ensure the fate of their soul—largely a negotiation between God and the devout—encouraged them to attempt to obtain such guarantees through the devotional image, even if the contents of private devotion were an active consequence of the liturgy and liturgical motifs that were reflected in personal piety. The *oratio exterior*, the word pronounced by the preachers, was more extraneous with respect to religious art than the *oratio interior*, which appealed instead to the imagination of the devout. The presence of the devotional image was accordingly more visible and approachable for the worshipper than the massive *retablos*, no matter how well-supplemented they were by the preacher's eloquence. The public image (either inside a church or within a convent or monastery) could, however, also be the subject of private, empathetic meditation if it was venerated in silence, outside the liturgy, thus proceeding to visually stimulate the faithful.[7]

On the whole, there were three different trends followed by medieval theology on images: one concerning their evocative value (referring to the cult image, and exemplified by SS. Basil of Caesarea[8] and John Damascene),[9] another related to their pedagogical capabilities (pertaining to the narrative image, as expounded by St. Gregory the Great)[10]

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[5] Vicente Álvarez Palenzuela and Betsabé Caunedo del Potro, "Disposiciones de la reina Isabel para la dignificación del culto y mantenimiento de las iglesias," in *Las mujeres en el cristianismo medieval. Imágenes teóricas y cauces de actuación religiosa*, ed. Ángela Muñoz Fernández (Madrid: Asociación Cultural Al-Mudayna, 1989), pp. 397–413.

[6] See in general Henk van Os *et al.*, *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe 1300–1500*, trans. Michael Hoyle (London: Merrell Holberton Publishers, 1994).

[7] Joan Molina i Figueras, "Contemplar, meditar, rezar. Función y uso de las imágenes de devoción en torno a 1500," in *El arte en Cataluña y los reinos hispanos en tiempos de Carlos I*, ed. Joaquín Yarza Luaces (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2000), pp. 89–105.

[8] Basil of Caesarea, *Liber de Spiritu Sancto* 18.38.45. Jacques Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologia Graeca* (Paris: Imprimerie Catholique, 1857–1866), hereafter *PG* 32:150–51.

[9] John of Damascus, *De Fide Orthodoxa* 4.16. *PG* 94:1167–174.

[10] Gregory the Great, *Registri Epistolarum* 11.13 (*Ad Serenum Massiliensem Episcopum*). Jacques Paul Migne, ed., *Patrologia Latina* (Paris, Imprimerie Catholique, 1849–1855), hereafter *PL* 77:1128.

and the last one—of Augustinian origin[11]—in connection with their empathetic significance, applicable to the devotional image. In this case the evaluation was focused on the attitude of the observer, who neither sought information or guidance through *historiæ* nor through the worship or reverence of ritual images, but aspired to a profound emotional experience. Both the narrative scene and the sacred icon helped to develop the *imago pietatis*.[12] Since the characters of history painting played out vividly an action that had taken place at a specific point in the past, the spectator, who did not belong to the same time illustrated by the action, had no place in the painting and fell outside the event. Conversely, the cult image, a symbolic representation of the mysteries of faith or theological concepts, was so self-contained and alien to the temporal that it turned out to be impenetrable. Only the image of devotion allowed the observer to identify themselves with what appeared, and to feel absorbed in its pictorial world. The facts narrated in these images had no place in a remote, fixed time in history, but they existed in the present epoch of the worshipper, who could see how the episode was reenacted daily.

The devotional image had a dual origin.[13] It arose either through the reduction or subtraction of elements of a narrative scene (*e.g.*, *Christ at the column* as crystallization of *The Scourging*), aiming to isolate the emotive core of the evangelical passage, or by the amplification and humanization of a hieratic ritual image (*e.g.*, the *Holy Face*, transformed into the *Salvator Mundi*, as in the Cleveland *Hours of Queen Isabella the Catholic*).[14] (fig. 14.1) At the same time, a *Pietà* could be interpreted as a compression of *The Lamentation* or *The Deposition from the Cross*, but also as an expansion or empathetic animation of *The Virgin and Child* to represent the suffering of Mary, who would

[11] Augustine, *Confessionum Libri Tredecim* 7.10.16. *PL* 32:742.

[12] On this process see Hans Belting, *L'arte e il suo pubblico. Funzione e forme delle antiche immagini della passione*, trans. Giorgio Cusatelli (Bologne: Nouva Alfa Editoriale, 1986).

[13] This concept was originally developed in 1927 by Erwin Panofsky, "*Imago Pietatis.* Contribution à l'histoire des types du 'Christ de Pitié'/'Homme de Douleurs' et de la 'Maria Mediatrix'," in *Peinture et dévotion en Europe du Nord à la fin du Moyen Âge*, trans. Daniela Becker (Paris: Flammarion, 1997), pp. 13–28.

[14] On Isabella the Catholic's illuminated manuscripts see Joaquín Yarza Luaces, "Los manuscritos iluminados de la Reina," in *El arte en la Corte de los Reyes Católicos. Rutas artísticas a principios de la Edad Moderna*, eds. Fernando Checa Cremades and Bernardo J. García García (Madrid: Fundación Carlos de Amberes, 2005), pp. 373–402.

Fig. 14.1 Alexander Bening and associates, *Salvator Mundi* from the *Hours of Queen Isabella the Catholic, Queen of Spain*, Cleveland Museum of Art, MS 1963.256, fol. 14v, *c.* 1495–1500. Photo: after Elisa Ruiz García, *El imaginario de una reina. Páginas selectas del patrimonio escrito de Isabel la Católica* (Madrid: AyN Ediciones, 2007), p. 62.

embrace her dead Son instead of the living Child, such as in the altarpiece painted by Rogier van der Weyden, on display at the Royal Chapel in Granada.[15] (fig. 14.2) Yet again, the division was not clearly defined.

The *imago pietatis* adopted preferably a half-figure shape (*imago dimidiata*). Due to this enlarged view, it gave meditation the immediacy of a quiet dialogue and had an almost myopic closeness favored by the devout. The small size of these *dimidiæ imagines* is not just attributable to their half-length format, but also to their tendency not to be larger than life-size. Few of these paintings go beyond an overall height or width of one meter. As a formula, the half-length figure was consistent with a trend characteristic of late medieval piety, intimately concerned with detailing the appearance of Christ and the Virgin. In fact, during the fifteenth century some devotions evolved directly linked to specific body parts of Mary and Christ: suffice it to say that the cult of the Holy Face or the Five Wounds peaked at this time in prayer manuals and prints.[16] These devotions privileged the creation of images whose facial and corporeal features were clearly visible. Accordingly, the *imago pietatis*—a composition isolated from a narrative context and limited to the most expressive parts of the human body (the face and the hands)—provided the best opportunity for elaborating physiognomical details and emphasizing the subtlest emotional traits, as if it were a sort of sacred portrait.

Rather than translating new content, the devotional image breathed new life into traditional dogmas. Let us recall that, in essence, the *imago pietatis* is a modified image which shows its subject in a precise way: in *forma pietatis*. As its main object, it aimed to create a certain psychological state in the beholder's mind.[17] Through its immediacy and focus, it stimulated piety, by producing a powerful, emotional experience of contemplative immersion. One of its most significant properties was the awareness of reciprocity that it offered to those who observed it. The devout not only saw the painting, but felt that the painting saw them. The image in this way was manipulated by the

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[15] Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón, *Libros, tapices y cuadros que coleccionó Isabel la Católica* (Madrid: CSIC, 1960), pp. 159–64.

[16] Louis Gougaud, *Dévotions et pratiques ascétiques du Moyen Âge* (Paris: Abbaye de Maredsous, 1925), p. 89.

[17] Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative. The Rise of the Dramatic Close-Up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting*, 2nd ed. (Doornspijk: Davaco, 1984), pp. 11–13.

Fig. 14.2 Rogier van der Weyden, *Nativity* and *Pietà* (*Altarpiece of the Virgin*), oil on panel, Cabildo, Capilla Real, Granada (hereafter CRG), *c.* 1435–38. Photo: after *Isabel la Católica. La magnificencia de un reinado* (Salamanca: Sociedad Estatal de Conmemoraciones Culturales, 2004), p. 108.

onlookers' wishes, who sought a picture that only spoke to them, a picture that engaged in a dialogue with them solely. In order to favor this spiritual transaction, a significant degree of iconic isolation was needed. The suppression of the adornments in the image and preference for the darkest backgrounds and nocturnal settings also obeyed a conscious desire to intensify the feeling of solitude and promote the reciprocity between the devout and their cult object.[18]

Following the Patristics' advice, images commissioned were often those projected by the worshipper in their inner vision, who correspondingly demanded religious artworks concordant with their mental pictures.[19] The consideration of an image as devotional stemmed not so much from the painting itself but from the attitude of the observer. If the devotee was so deeply immersed in contemplating the image that their piety was stirred, to the extent of identifying themselves with the issue represented, then one could say that the image became devotional. In this manner, the mimetic power of the image induced the very imitation of the spectator, who felt the need to emulate in their life what the painting showed, as I will later illustrate with the *Annunciation* theme.

The personal piety had at its disposal a corpus of edifying texts developed out of the ancient medieval tradition of monastic devotions, which eventually spread to secular circles. Since the twelfth century, and parallel to the spread of *apocrypha*, the scant indications of the Gospel on the earthly life of Jesus were being augmented with additional content. The literature of spirituality (*De passion Christi, et doloribus, etc planctibus Matris ejus liber* attributed to St. Bernard of Clairvaux, or the *Meditations vitae Christi*, written by Joannes de Caulibus in mid-fourteenth century) recounted Bible stories and lives of saints with greater psychological depth and vivacity than the original sources, which were unable to fully meet the interests of meditation, and explained how to reach a devotional engagement in private, outside of ritual. At the end of the fifteenth century, some treatises began to appear in Spain with the aim of teaching their readers to compose

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[18] The use of these dark backgrounds would last well into the Spanish Renaissance, as evidenced by the works of Titian or Bassano in the collection of Philip II. See Miguel Falomir Faus, *Los Bassano en la España del Siglo de Oro* (Madrid: Museo Nacional del Prado, 2001), pp. 48–50.

[19] Sixten Ringbom, "Devotional Images and Imaginative Devotions: Notes on the Place of Art in Late Medieval Private Piety," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 6/73 (1969), pp. 159–70.

mental representations of evangelical scenes, to such an extent as to imagine themselves being present at each event. These representations used to merge several moments taken from different stages of the narration and thus separated in time, but amalgamated by the underlying idea that the devout wished to extract from their visualization. Such writings were so emphatic about the importance of the eyewitness' gaze that this trait can be regarded as one of the most striking features of private piety. As this method required an intense imaginative effort the contemplative person would often resort to images.[20] (fig. 14.3) For example, the Franciscan poet Íñigo de Mendoza (1425–1507), one of Isabella the Catholic's preachers, wrote an ode in rhyming couplets devoted to the Veronica (1483–1484) where words semantically related to sight underline the visual engagement on the worshipper's part: "*Contempla en tu rey de Gloria / que te dexa su figura / con tal visión y presura / porque ayas dél memoria*" ("Behold [in] your King of Glory / Who bestows his figure upon you / With such a vision and swiftness / So that you have memory of him").[21]

The contemplation of images in conjunction with devotional books was based upon a methodical praying pattern, which in turn depended on a rhetorical organization, formally derived from the declamatory structure of an ekphrastic sermon; that is, a vivid and visual chronicle exposed in a straightforward sequence. Sometimes the text was redundant with respect to the image, and in other cases it showed features lacking in the illustrations; the image could also be a kind of gloss on the text and the latter act as a key to the depiction. At other times the narrative structure was so complex that the image became unintelligible without the textual support.[22] These intricate images, termed "graphic sermons,"[23] were especially favored in full-page woodcuts such as the

[20] François Quiviger, "Imagining and Composing Stories in the Renaissance," in *Pictorial Composition from Medieval to Modern Art*, ed. Paul Taylor and François Quiviger (London: The Warburg Institute, 2000), pp. 45–57. One of such images, *The Multiplication of the five loaves and fishes* from the *Polyptych of Isabella the Catholic* (1496–1504), shows the portrait of the queen's family in the lower left. See also Felipe Pereda, "Isabel I, Señora de los Moriscos: Figuración como historia profética en una tabla de Juan de Flandes," in *Visiones de la Monarquía Hispánica*, ed. Victor Mínguez (Castellón: Universitat Jaume I, 2007), pp. 261–82.

[21] Íñigo de Mendoza, *Cancionero*, ed. Julio Rodríguez-Puértolas (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1968), p. 211.

[22] Michael Camille, "Seeing and reading: some visual implications of medieval literacy and illiteracy," *Art History* 8/1 (Mar 1985), pp. 26–49.

[23] Antonio Bonet Correa, dir., *Estampas. Cinco Siglos de Imagen Impresa* (Madrid: Subdirección General de Museos, 1981), pp. 71–78.

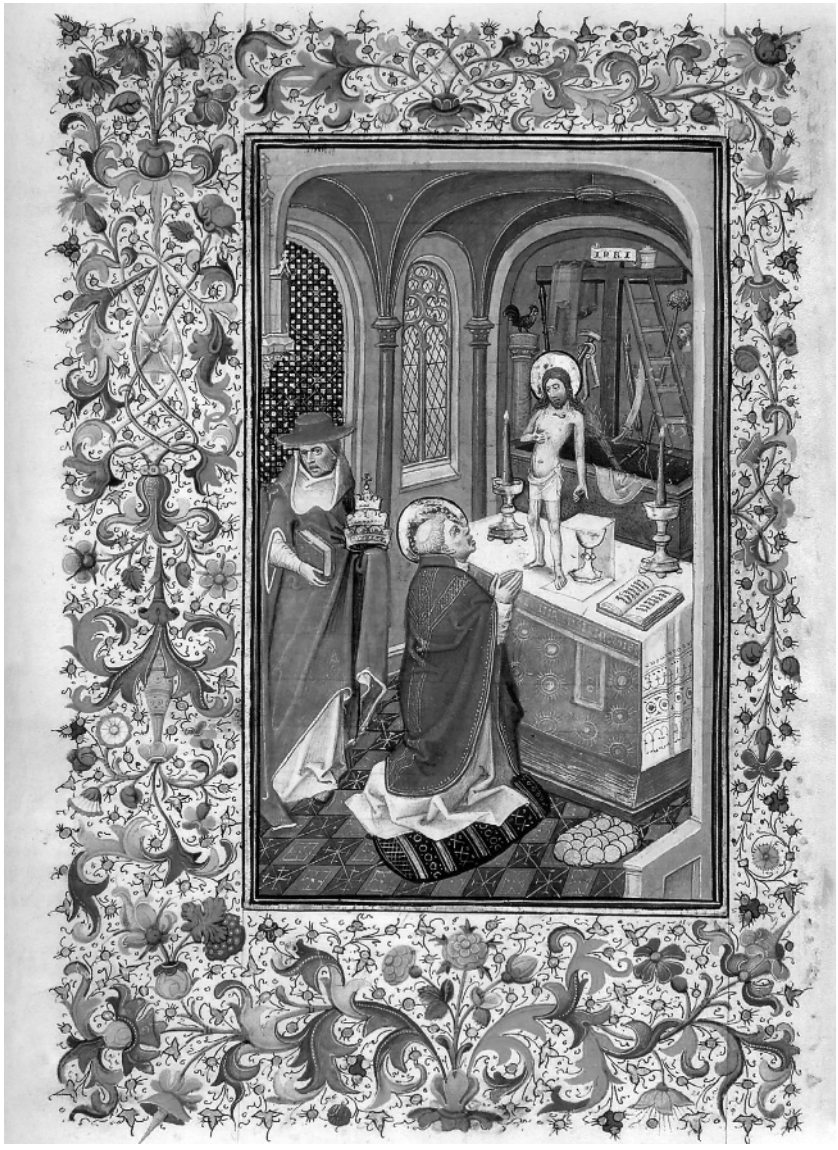

Fig. 14.3 Guillaume Vrelant, *The Mass of St. Gregory* from the *Book of Hours of Isabella the Catholic*, Patrimonio Nacional (hereafter PN), Real Biblioteca de Palacio, Madrid, MS II/Tesoro, fol. 327v, *c.* 1460–70. Photo: Patrimonio Nacional, Madrid.

Virgin of Rosary by Francisco Doménech (1488) or the title page of the *Thesoro de la passion sacratissima de nuestro redemptor*, which Andrés de Li dedicated to the Catholic Kings in 1496. This verbalized aid entailed two consecutive acts on the part of the devout: first, the reading of the text itself, and later the correlation of its words with the iconic elements of the picture.[24] The observer could then complete the artwork interpreting imaginatively the gestures and facial expressions of those depicted, even adding the verbal discourse appropriate to the subject matter. As a result, the written content not only helped to explain or comment on the work of art, but also reinforced its conversational effect.[25] From all this it can be deduced that the meaning of the images destined for contemplation resided, in good measure, on the exercise of perception, and so need to be analyzed as part of an abstract process, not as independent, autonomous objects. The devotional image was as much a tool to be manipulated as an artwork.

The images associated with texts, apart from stirring the most profound emotions (*movere*), combined the necessity of delight (*delectatio*)—entrusted to the picture as a way of *captatio benevolentiæ*—with doctrine. Regarding the texts themselves, throughout the meditation the author appealed directly to the reader by means of apostrophes, questions and exclamations. These continuous link procedures compelled the faithful to feel concerned and pulled by personal pronouns (*yo, tú*), by the repeated use of the imperative or certain adverbs such as *aquí* and *ahora*, and by expressions characteristic of a lyrical and suggestive language (*¡oh, tú!, ¡oh, alma mía!, considera, pondera, advierte, atiende, contempla, oye, medita*).[26]

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[24] Giovanni Pozzi, *Sull'orlo del visibile parlare* (Milan: Adelphi, 1993), pp. 461–62.

[25] Lynette M.F. Bosch, "Image and Devotion in Late Fifteenth- and Early Sixteenth-Century Spanish Painting," in *The Word Made Image: Religion, Art and Architecture in Spain and Spanish America, 1500–1600*, *Fenway Court* 28 (Boston: Trustees of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 1998), pp. 30–45.

[26] On these books, intensively used by Isabella the Catholic, see Elisa Ruiz García, *Los libros de Isabel la Católica. Arqueología de un patrimonio escrito* (Salamanca: Instituto de Historia del Libro y de la Lectura, 2004), pp. 174–182. To name but two titles written in this empathetic style, see Pseudo-Bonaventure, *Enseñamiento del coraçon* (Salamanca: *s. n.*, 1498) and Ludolph of Saxony, *Vita Christi cartuxano*, trans. Ambrosio de Montesino, 4 vols. (Alcalá de Henares: Estanislao Polono, 1502–1503).

The Mind's Eye: Tears and Passion imagery in the collection of Isabella the Catholic

The private image was not only an instrument of devotion, but visible proof of inner life: the *imago pietatis* extolled the visual capabilities of the religious experience. Meditating before paintings or sculptures was an activity that trained lay people to behave as the saints had done before, since they often experienced their visions facing specific images. SS. Bernard and Francis, followed by Dominic, Peter of Verona and Catherine of Siena, among others, provide good examples. The representation of ecstatic visions somehow constituted a mystical justification and an apology for the use of imagery. Correspondingly, while exercising their own visual imagination, the devout could share the saints' experience for a time. It is necessary, however, to consider what was then understood as the act of vision. For medieval Christian thought, the visible equaled the evanescent, the insubstantial, and corruptible. The supernatural world, the kingdom of the eternal and essential, of which the earthly world was nothing but a pale and inappropriate reflection was much more real. Fragile, daily life depended on the very existence of this spiritual orbit, whose superior reality could not be directly apprehended by the senses, except with the mediation of grace.[27] This explains the three grades of the Augustinian vision, each one more perfect than the previous one: the *visio corporalis* (the faculty of vision), the *visio spiritualis* (or imaginary) and the *visio intellectualis* (characteristic of the saints).[28] To reach the third degree, that of intellectual vision, St. Augustine suggested purifying and exercising the mind's eye (*acies mentis*); of course, both faith and divine illumination were a *sine qua non* condition.[29] Only the saints could enjoy, with the help of God, the visionary experience.[30] On this

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[27] Bob Scribner, "Ways of seeing in the age of Dürer," in *Dürer and his culture*, eds. D. Eichberger and Charles Zika (1998; repr. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 93–117.

[28] Augustine, *De Genesi ad litteram* 12.6.15. *PL* 34:458–459.

[29] Augustine, *De Trinitate* 8.4.6. *PL* 42:951. See Margaret Miles, "Vision: The Eye of the Body and the Eye of the Mind in Saint Augustine's *De trinitate* and *Confessions*," *The Journal of Religion* 63/2 (Apr 1983), pp. 125–42.

[30] I cannot therefore agree with the usual assertion that donors such as Canon Van der Paele or Chancellor Nicolas Rolin are experiencing visions before the Virgin in Jan Van Eyck's paintings of *c.* 1435–1436. According to my proposition, they are imagining mental pictures. On the traditional point of view, see Craig Harbison, "Realism and Symbolism in Early Flemish Painting," *The Art Bulletin* 66/4 (Dec. 1984), pp. 588–602.

subject, a recurring example was the miraculous episode of *The Mass of St. Gregory*, to which I shall return later.[31] (fig. 14.3)

For practical purposes, the devotional experience was limited to the first two grades of vision. The use of the image as incentive and aid for the meditation involved a preparatory stage for a higher level of consideration, a mental state ideally aniconic in which external support was not required.[32] According to this, the act of the corporeal *vision* means one gazes at a religious image made by an artist, as shown in the *Annunciation* and *Donor* panels by the Master of Sopetrán in the Prado Museum. (fig. 14.4) In this pair of panels, the donor, perhaps Diego Hurtado de Mendoza (1415–1479), first Duke of the Infantado, appears praying before an altar on which a Calvary is crowned by a painted tabernacle which surrounds a sculpture of the Virgin. The association of this figure with an Annunciation does not seem unintentional, because in this iconography the kneeling posture of Mary invited the devout to do the same, that is, to pray.[33] Furthermore, in the Virgin's bedroom we can notice the compulsory devices that usually denote the private devotional spaces: the prie-dieu, the Book of Hours or prayer manual and the *imago pietatis*.

With respect to the spiritual vision, the second grade in the ascent to mystical perfection or *philocalia* laid in the ability to evoke absent objects or to imagine things not seen from verbal or textual descriptions. This type of vision demanded memory and imagination. It can be exemplified by a painting like *The Virgin of the Catholic Kings*. (fig. 14.5) Here Isabella and Ferdinand kneel before the holy persons of Mary and the Christ Child, in the presence of Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint Dominic. The monarchs stare towards the enthroned Virgin, but this is not a miraculous or posthumous apparition; instead, it expresses that this is a mental picture envisaged by the imaginative devotion of the Catholic Kings.[34]

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[31] Elisa Ruiz García, *El imaginario de una reina. Páginas selectas del patrimonio escrito de Isabel la Católica* (Madrid: AyN Ediciones, 2007), pp. 81–92. On *The Mass of St. Gregory* as the principal meta-subject of the late medieval altarpiece, see Joseph Leo Koerner, *The Reformation of the Image* (London: Reaktion Books, 2004), pp. 355–61.

[32] Jean-Claude Schmitt, "*Imago:* de l'image à l'imaginaire," in *L'image. Fonctions et usages des images dans l'Occident médiéval*, eds. Jerôme Baschet and Jean-Claude Schmitt (Paris: Cahiers du Léopard d'Or, 1996), pp. 29–37.

[33] Moshe Barasch, "The Spectator and the Eloquence of Renaissance Painting," in *The Language of Art. Studies in Interpretation* (New York: New York University Press, 1997), pp. 302–18.

[34] Sonia Caballero Escamilla, "La Virgen de los Reyes Católicos: Escaparate de un poder personal e institucional," *Reales Sitios* 173 (2007), pp. 20–41.

Fig. 14.4 Master of Sopetrán, *Annunciation* and *Donor*, altarpiece, tempera and oil on panel, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid (hereafter MNP), *c*. 1470. Photo: after *Reyes y mecenas. Los Reyes Católicos—Maximiliano I y los inicios de la Casa de Austria en España* (Toledo: Electa, 1992), pp. 309–10.

If asking for the intercession of the Virgin required placing oneself figuratively before her personification, to imitate Christ it was essential to start by visualizing him. The *Holy Face* was probably the image that imposed higher awe and reverence, mostly thanks to the gaze of Christ, which seemed to follow the viewer wherever they moved.[35] This was a demonstration of God's all-embracing power, of his *Maiestas*, as elucidated in Prov. 15. 3: "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."[36] The spectator who knew that the all-seeing

[35] Moshe Barasch, "The Frontal Icon—A Genre in Christian Art," in *Imago Hominis. Studies in the language of art* (Vienna: IRSA Verlag, 1991), pp. 26–35.

[36] Johannes Kollwitz, "Das Bild von Christus dem König in Kunst und Liturgie der christlichen Frühzeit," *Theologie und Glaube* 37–38 (1947–48), pp. 95–118.

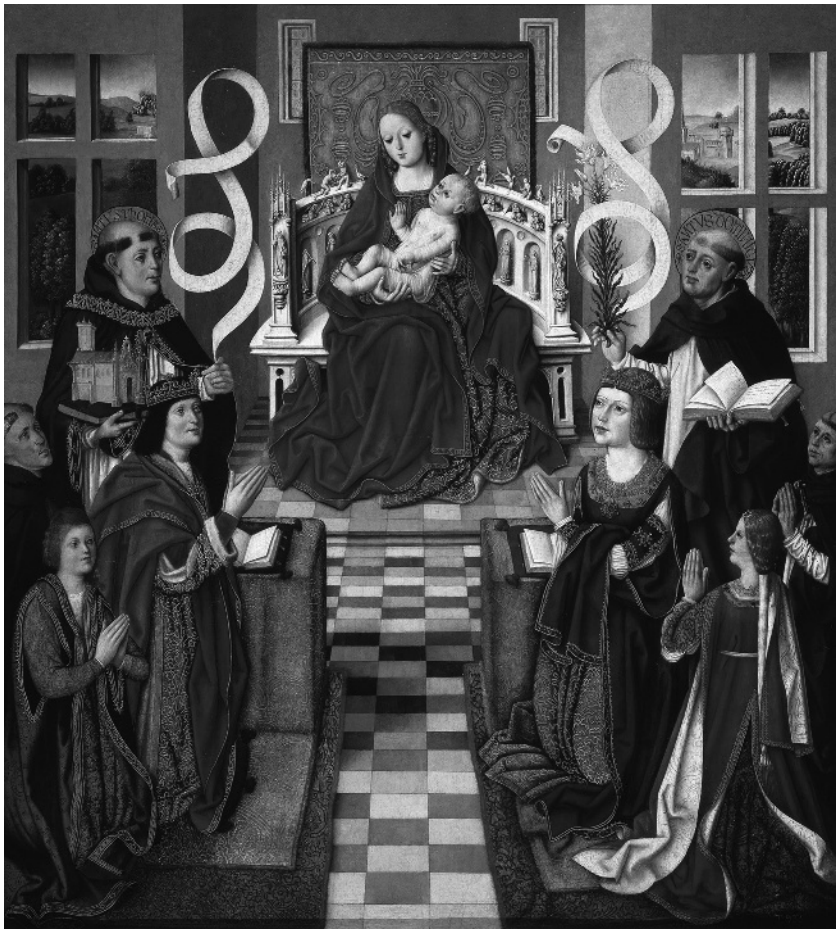

Fig. 14.5 Master of the Virgin of the Catholic Kings (Friar Pedro de Salamanca?), *The Virgin of the Catholic Kings*, tempera on panel, MNP, *c.* 1497. Photo: after *Reyes y mecenas. Los Reyes Católicos—Maximiliano I y los inicios de la Casa de Austria en España* (Toledo: Electa, 1992), p. 83.

eye of the Savior—his omniscience—watched constantly over her/him, experienced before the Holy Face a feeling of total dependence.[37]

The episodes of Christ's life explicitly served for the Christological devotion and, among them, the Passion was the quintessence of all

[37] Stephanie Leitch, "Seeing Objects in Private Devotion," in *Pious Journeys. Christian Devotional Art and Practice in the Later Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Linda Seidel (Chicago: David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago, 2001), pp. 43–60.

his suffering to redeem humanity. The continual prayer of the sinner before Passion imagery complied with an intention of restaging and witnessing the endless Passion undergone by Jesus. They were images of grief, but also of accusation: grief for the affliction of the depicted, and accusation hurled at the faithful, whose sins had made necessary the suffering of Christ. In order to move to tears there were particularly appropriate images. The act of devotional crying distinguished between *contritio* (a passive state) and *compunctio* (an action or movement). Compunction was a dual experience, as distressing as capable of being stimulated by imagery. Yet the aim was not to give way to weeping, but to repent.[38] Tears had a cathartic effect that purified sins and served to penitential self-knowledge, the first stage of methodical prayer, which was followed by meditation and contemplation.[39]

Because of their intrinsic proclivity for emotional issues, some believers were more inclined to this *gratia lacrymarum* (grace of tears). Others, like penitent saints, not only had received this divine mercy, but enjoyed it permanently while praying.[40] In painting, tears were usually reserved for individuals—especially women—who had an inherent sanctity, but not every suffering character had to mourn, as proved, *e.g.*, by the Condemned in the Final Judgment.[41] Ultimately all those depicted mourning could move to tears, especially in Passion scenes of high drama and emotional turmoil like the *Descent from the Cross* or the *Pietà*, and also in composite images derived from the *Man of Sorrows*.

A highly developed version of this sort of compunction scenes is the diptych of the *Descent from the Cross*, by Hans Memling. (fig. 14.6) The central figures of Christ and his Mother operate as triggering elements of the subject. The actors arrange themselves so that the left half, unshaken and regularly ordered, contrasts with the devastated,

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[38] John Chrysavgis, "Κατάνυξις: Compunction as the Context for the Theology of Tears in St. John Climacus," *Kleronomia* 17/1 (1985), pp. 131–36.

[39] Juan Luis González García, "Imágenes empáticas y diálogos pintados: arte y devoción en el reinado de Isabel la Católica," in *Isabel la Católica. La magnificencia de un reinado*, ed. Fernando Checa Cremades (Salamanca: Sociedad Estatal de Conmemoraciones Culturales, 2004), pp. 99–114.

[40] Piroska Nagy, *Le don des larmes au Moyen Âge. Un instrument spirituel en quête d'institution (V^e^–XIII^e^ siècle)* (Paris: Editions Albin Michel, 2000), pp. 421–30.

[41] Moshe Barasch, "The Crying Face," in *Imago Hominis* (see above, n. 35), pp. 85–99.

Fig. 14.6 Hans Memling, *The Descent from the Cross*, diptych, oil on panel, CRG, *c.* 1480–90. Source: *Isabel la Católica. La magnificencia de un reinado* (Salamanca: Sociedad Estatal de Conmemoraciones Culturales, 2004), p. 107.

grief-stricken Virgin and Three Holy Women on the right half.[42] Starting from a narrative theme, the *Descent from the Cross*, just like the *Pietà* by Rogier van der Weyden, (fig. 14.2) guided the meditating spectator towards an empathetic reading of the scene.[43] "Pity" was also a keyword in the literature of spirituality. It not only alluded to the pity felt by the observer when contemplating the dead Christ and his grieving mother, but also concerned those who expect to receive this pity from Christ and the Virgin to achieve their own salvation. The *Pietà*, as a representation of the *Planctus* (Lament) of the weeping Mary at the foot of the Cross, was a typology fitted to what is known as *imagines monstrantes* (showing images), those which, by means of exhibiting the cult object (the dead body of Christ held in the Virgin's arms while she kisses the Savior's face), would invite the queen to an affective imitation.[44]

Nevertheless, the *imago monstrante* par excellence was, without a doubt, the *Man of Sorrows*.[45] This iconography, mentioned earlier, was related to the legend that told how St. Gregory, during the celebration of mass in the church of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome, had seen the Lord "*in specie pastoris sub effigie pietatis*" (in shepherd form, effigied in piety), a phrase that would give rise to the term *imago pietatis*. Subsequently he commissioned an image crafted according to the miracle, which was—let us not forget—a visual, not a discursive or physical experience, in which the saint heard or touched nothing. The *Man of Sorrows*, as known today, was a synthesis between the heavenly *Salvator* and the martyred God-man placed in the sepulcher. A panel, attributed to Pietro Perugino and kept at Granada (post-1495), was a commemorative image in remembrance of an exemplary death, allusive at the same time to one of the paradoxes of the Christian dogma: God dies like man when he, as God incarnate, cannot die. The prospect of a deceased person, which normally causes disgust, was bearable by the awareness that Christ was actually alive, standing on the sepulcher with his arms extended and palms open. This blending of life and death was a consequence of another great paradox or mystery, impenetrable

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[42] Moshe Barasch, *Gestures of Despair in Medieval and Early Renaissance Art* (New York: New York University Press, 1976), pp. 57–86.

[43] Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 354–56.

[44] Belting, *L'arte e il suo pubblico* (see above, n. 12), pp. 96–99.

[45] See Wiltrud Mersmann, *Der Schmerzensmann* (Düsseldorf: Verlag L. Schwann, 1952).

to the intellect and acceptable only through faith, which declared the union of the divine and human nature in one person. Such powerful images were able to guide Isabella's vision entirely by themselves. She would contemplate, engrossed, how Christ himself opened his arms and showed his palms to her, with his wounds emphasized by the red color applied by the artist, in contrast to the whiteness of his flesh.

The cult of the Holy Blood was an important attribute of Passion piety. In late medieval pious texts, Christ's wounds were treated with lingering (and almost Dionysiac) detail, as symbols of his suffering and humanity. Transformed into reverential objects, the Five Wounds assumed an unambiguously engaging function when he indicated directly his side wound with an exhortative gesture. The *ostentatio vulnerum* became a pictorial subject that was already widespread in the literary pre-figurations of the Final Judgment, where the Virgin played a mediating role by inviting to venerate her son's wounds. In this painting by Memling, the Virgin, *Sedes Sapientiae*, became a living ostensory (or monstrance) meant to show the sacrificed Christ. (fig. 14.7) With her pitiful and desolate aspect, she would arouse the compassion of the Catholic Queen and would serve as an intermediary to bestow upon God those prayers addressed to his image. In this case, the *Arma Christi* represented an interpolation accumulated to the *Man of Sorrows* to illustrate symbolically their traditional relationship with the Final Judgment (where the *Arma Christi* were carried by angels) and brought back the memory of different Passion chapters, so that Isabella would not only consider the future of humanity, but also her own.[46]

The mnemonic and self-referential devotion of Charles V

Images such as these did not function as portrayals or replicas of something concrete, but rather as signs that facilitated evocation through visualization. Meditative techniques were, as a rule, mnemonic acts. The empathetic image helped the devout to fix in the memory the

[46] On the *Arma Christi* and the idea of surrounding an object with devotional elements to guide meditation, see Massimiliano Rossi, "Gedächtnis und Andacht: Über die Mnemotechnik biblischer Texte im 15. Jahrhundert," in *Mnemosyne: Formen und Funktionen der kulturellen Erinnerung*, eds. Aleida Assmann and Dietrich Harth (Frankfurt A.M.: Fischer Taschenbuch, 1991), pp. 177–99.

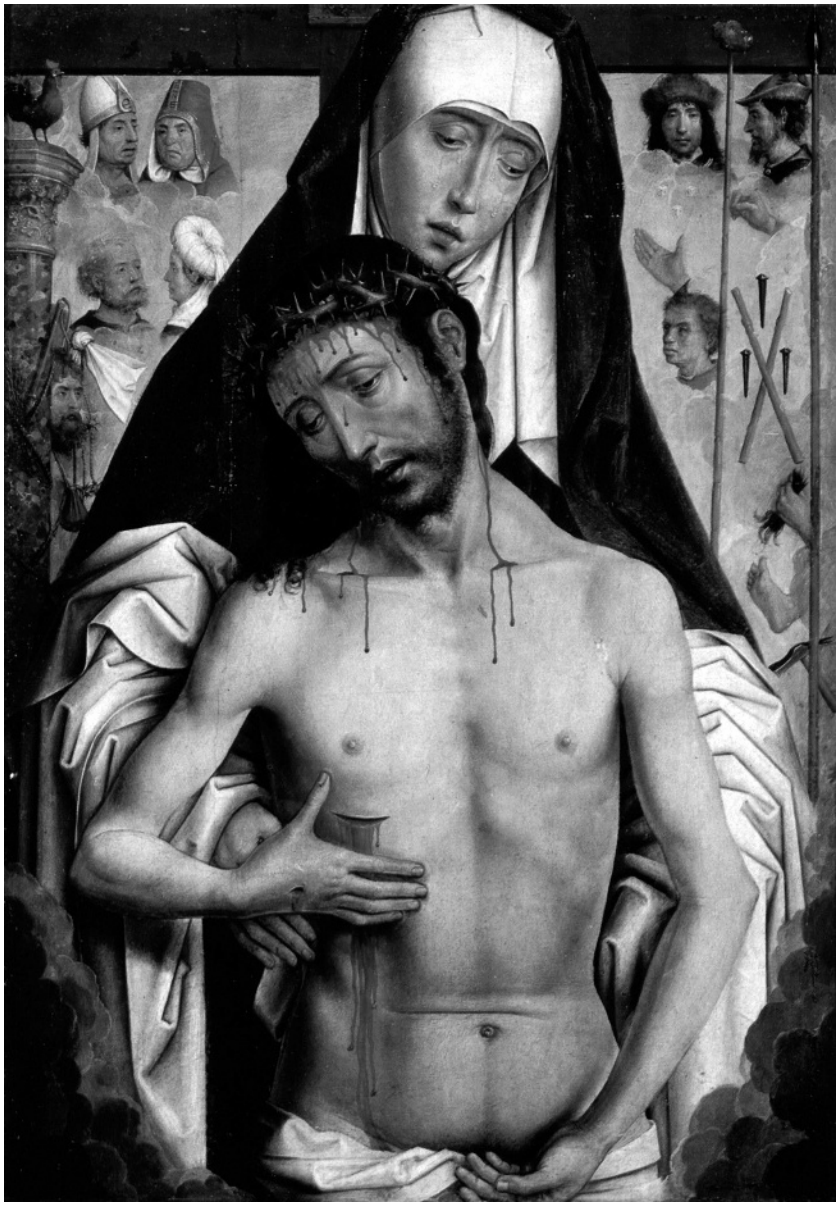

Fig. 14.7 Hans Memling, *The Virgin holding the Dead Christ*, oil on panel, CRG, *c.* 1475. Photo: after *Isabel la Católica. La magnificencia de un reinado* (Salamanca: Sociedad Estatal de Conmemoraciones Culturales, 2004), p. 109.

intimate thoughts of meditation, since the most effective memory training was rooted in mental pictures, as maintained by the rhetorical tradition.[47] In Spain, oratory training was one of the bases of education, and being an orator was the profession of many. Moreover, the earliest indicators of the emergence of Spanish Humanism are the translations of classical rhetorical texts well known during the Middle Ages, which are among the first European versions in the vernacular of treatises on eloquence from Antiquity.[48] Alfonso de Cartagena (1384–1456), bishop and diplomat in the service of John II, translated Cicero's *De inventione* around 1422 (now kept at El Escorial),[49] while his contemporary Enrique de Villena (1384–1434), great-uncle of Isabella, undertook the translation of the pseudo-Ciceronian *Ad Herennium* at the end of his life. As an extra proof of this interest in court circles, a lost copy of the rhetorical works of Cicero was even inventoried among the manuscripts bequeathed by Isabella I to the Royal Chapel in Granada.[50]

Memory was one of the five parts of Ciceronian oratory, along with Invention, Disposition, Elocution, and Pronunciation.[51] Erasmus of Rotterdam, in his *De ratione studii* (1529), considered memory fostering an extremely valuable and useful tool, not only for the preacher, but for any educated Christian. In order to remember "place-names in geography for instance, metrical feet, grammatical figures, genealogies, and so forth," the humanist proposed "having them written as briefly and attractively as possible on charts and hung up on the walls of a room where they are generally conspicuous even to those engaged on something else." And then, to memorize "pithy sayings such as aphorisms, proverbs, and maxims," he recommended writing them "at the beginning and at the end of your books…so that what may aid learning is constantly before the eye."[52] The *artes memoriæ* (memorative arts) of the Renaissance—like that written by Lodovico Dolce (1562),

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[47] See Mary J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[48] Ottavio di Camillo, *El humanismo castellano del siglo XV* (Valencia: Fernando Torres, 1976), pp. 49–66.

[49] Alfonso de Cartagena, *La Rhetórica de M. Tullio Cicerón*, ed. Rosalba Mascagna (Naples: Liguori, 1969).

[50] Ruiz García, *Los libros* (see above, n. 26), p. 419.

[51] Cicero, *De oratore* 2.85.350–2.88.360, trans. E.W. Sutton and H. Rackham (1942; repr. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), pp. 463–71.

[52] Desiderius Erasmus, *Collected Works: Literary and Educational Writings*, ed. Craig R. Thompson, 2 vols. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 2, p. 671.

orator and biographer of Emperor Charles V—were typically based on visual aids.[53] Before going to sleep, Charles was in the habit of kneeling down before an image and saying a customized adaptation of the Creed.[54] This profession of faith, hand-written on parchment, appears at the beginning of the *Librico* (Little Book) of Charles V. This tiny book pendant, bound in an exquisite Renaissance-style in gold, rubies and enamels, should be identified with the memory booklet with gold covers that is mentioned in the emperor's inventories,[55] where he surely had his favorite prayers written to keep them always at hand.

The emperor's private piety was mnemonic, silent, and iconic.[56] Many contemporary sources confirm that he was very fond of devotional images.[57] Coincidentally with the ideas of Alfonso (1500–1532) and Juan de Valdés (1509–1541), Charles honored images without "becoming so absorbed" in them "and other material things"—as did the illiterate—that he was "neglecting the invisible things, including the Holy Sacrament…in comparison with which all the images in the world are worthless…"[58] He had also practiced mental prayer on a daily basis since turning twenty-one, which we know from his friend and relative St. Francis Borgia (1510–1572).[59] This sort of worship did not consist in reciting to himself the words of previously composed vocal prayers, but combined personal reflections on a text from the Bible or from some other spiritual work with his own words, spoken to God in a heart-to-heart conversation.[60]

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[53] Lodovico Dolce, *Dialogo…nel quale si raggiona del modo di accrescere e conservar la memoria* (Venice: Gio. Battista et Marchio Sessa fratelli, 1562).

[54] Prudencio de Sandoval, *Historia de la vida y hechos del Emperador Carlos V. Máximo, fortísimo, Rey Católico de España y de las Indias, Islas y Tierra firme del mar Océano*, ed. Carlos Seco Serrano, 3 vols. (1614, Madrid: Atlas, 1955–1956), 3, pp. 565–66.

[55] Vicente de Cadenas y Vicent, ed., *Hacienda de Carlos V al fallecer en Yuste* (Madrid: Hidalguía, 1985), p. 9.

[56] Juan Luis González García, "La memoria del emperador: libros, imágenes y devociones de Carlos V en Yuste," in *El monasterio de Yuste*, ed. Fernando Checa Cremades (Madrid: Fundación Caja Madrid, 2007), pp. 109–34.

[57] Marcel Bataillon, *Erasmo y España. Estudios sobre la historia espiritual del siglo XVI*, trans. Antonio Alatorre (1966; repr. Madrid: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1995), p. 386, n. 13.

[58] Alfonso de Valdés, *Dialogue of Lactancio and an Archdeacon*, ed. and trans. John E. Longhurst and Raymond R. MacCurdy (1529, Albuquerque: The University of New Mexico Press: 1952), p. 83.

[59] Francisco González de Andía, *El perfecto desengaño*, ed. María Dolores Cabra Loredo (1638, Madrid: El Museo Universal, 1983), p. 80.

[60] Teresa of Jesus, *Los libros de la Madre Teresa de Iesvs fundadora de los monesterios de monjas y frayles Carmelitas descalços de la primera regla* (Salamanca: Guillermo Foquel, 1589), *Moradas*, p. 138.

In 1556, weary of the constant struggles and heavy responsibilities of his scattered realms, Charles V announced his intention to abdicate the imperial crown in favor of his brother, Ferdinand I (1503–1564). He retired that year to the monastery of San Jerónimo de Yuste in Extremadura, Spain. His renouncement of his immense temporal power for the salvation of his soul turned into an example for the Habsburg house, and his devotional habits—most of them concordant with the Trastamaras', his grandparents[61]—came to define the religious virtues of the Spanish Hapsburgs hereafter. The *Pietas Austriaca* was distinguished, first and foremost, by its Eucharistic fervor,[62] followed by providentialism; the devotion to the Trinity, the Holy Cross,[63] the Virgin, the saints and their relics; and a singular affection for the sacraments.[64] Of these Hapsburgian devotions, the emperor respected throughout his life the *Mandatum* (the washing of the feet of thirteen poor on Maundy Thursday, together with almsgiving), although in his last moments, lacking the strength to do so, he had to entrust this ceremony to his confessor.[65] As we also know from Hernando del Corral, professed monk at Yuste since 1534, that on Good Friday Charles adored the Cross for three times, with his mouth, eyes and head, kissing the feet of the crucifix[66] That was not a special privilege bestowed on him or the friars, but a moving sign of his religious fervor. Philip II preserved all these pious customs as a family token and emulated his father's devotion throughout his life.[67]

When in prayer, Charles had before his eyes a selected collection of religious images, some of them painted by Tiziano Vecellio (*c.* 1488–1576) and Michel Coxcie (1499–1592), which eventually would be

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[61] See Ángela Muñoz Fernández, "Notas para la definición de un modelo socio-religioso femenino: Isabel I de Castilla," in *Las mujeres en el cristianismo medieval* (see above, n. 5), pp. 415–34.

[62] Louis-Prosper Gachard, *Retraite et mort de Charles-Quint au Monastère de Yuste. Lettres inédites publiées d'après les originaux conservés dans les Archives Royales de Simancas*, 2 vols. (Brussels: M. Hayez, 1854–1855), 2, pp. 33–34.

[63] José Ignacio Tellechea Idígoras, *Así murió el Emperador. La última jornada de Carlos V (Yuste, 21 septiembre 1558)* (Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia, 1995), p. 99.

[64] Alfonso Rodríguez G. de Ceballos, "Carlos V, paradigma de la *Pietas Austriaca*," in *Carlos V. Las armas y las letras*, eds. Fernando Marías and Felipe Pereda (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 2000), pp. 243–60.

[65] Vicente de Cadenas y Vicent, *Carlos de Habsburgo en Yuste. 3-II-1557–21-IX-1558*, 3rd ed. (Madrid: Hidalguía, 2000), p. 67.

[66] Cadenas y Vicent, p. 67.

[67] José de Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden de San Jerónimo*, ed. Ángel Weruaga Prieto, 2 vols. (1605, Salamanca: Junta de Castilla y León, 2000), 2, p. 474, 488, 496.

inherited by Philip II. (fig. 14.8) Unlike his son, who was fascinated by the works Titian referred to as *poesie* and the narrative-allegorical works of a religious nature which made the Venetian master famous, Charles V valued Titian foremost for his portraits and secondly, for his religious paintings.[68] In his final years spent in his refuge at Yuste, he would contemplate the works of Titian to attain the peace and consolation he needed. The emperor chose these subjects not just because of his taste, but also for reasons of *decorum*, taking into account the vicinity of the monastery and the church to his quarters. According to José de Sigüenza, a Hieronymite monk and prior of the monastery of El Escorial where he served as preacher, librarian, and historian, those were the two pictorial genres he asked to contemplate just after visiting his confessor, and before undergoing his last illness: the portrait of his beloved wife, *Empress Isabella of Portugal* (1548, Museo Nacional del Prado), who had passed away almost twenty years before, and two religious images: *The Agony in the Garden*, which I shall discuss later, and *The Glory*.[69] (fig. 14.9)

The unusual composition of *The Glory*, commissioned from Titian in Augsburg, must correspond to precise instructions on the part of the emperor. It is presided over by the Holy Trinity, with the Virgin and behind her St. John the Baptist on the right; to the left of the Trinity, angels with palms accompany members of the imperial family, who are barefooted and wrapped in shrouds, posed in supplicant attitudes but practically unrecognizable in their physical appearance. Charles has the imperial crown next to him and is next to his deceased wife Isabella, while behind and slightly below are his son Philip and other family members. The painting's meaning is difficult to establish. Although it might initially be considered a visual representation of the Trinitarian orthodoxy of the Hapsburgs, and therefore endowed with dogmatic dynastic values, it had a devotional character for Charles V and depicted his hopes for eternal salvation (in the emperor's codicil it is entitled a "*Final Judgment*"), as a representation of the judgment of his own soul and that of his family, pleading for entry into

[68] Charles V's correspondence with Titian confirms his exclusive preference for portraits and religious subjects. See Matteo Mancini, ed., *Tiziano e le corti d'Asburgo nei documenti degli archivi spagnoli* (Venice: Istituto Veneto di Scienze, 1998), pp. 159–64 (on a pair of portraits of empress Isabella of Portugal, 1545), p. 220 (on unidentified portraits, 1553), and pp. 223–239, regarding *The Glory* and a *Virgin Dolorosa* (1553–1555).

[69] Sigüenza, *Historia* (see above, n. 67), 2, pp. 171–72.

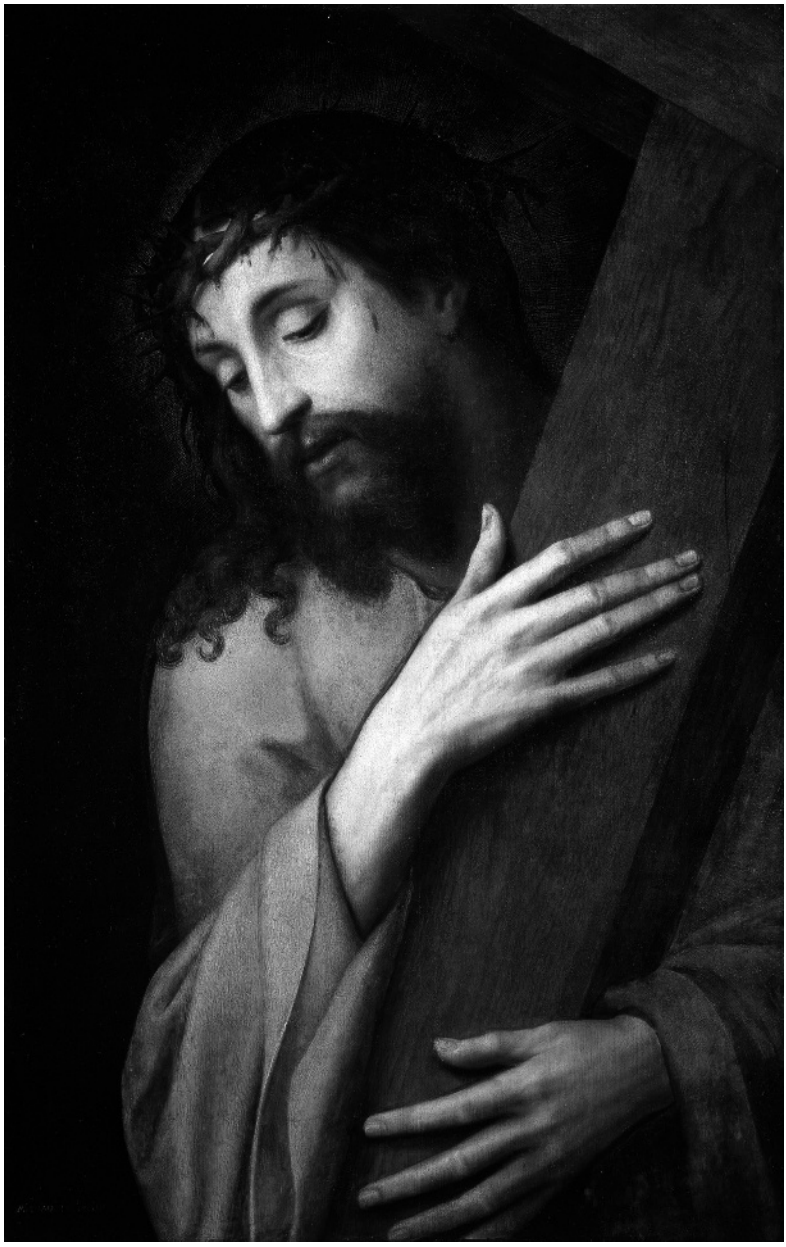

Fig. 14.8 Michel Coxcie, *Christ carrying the Cross*, oil on panel, MNP, *c.* 1555. Charles V had this painting paired with Figure 13. Photo: after *Felipe II. Un Príncipe del Renacimiento* (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 1998), p. 350.

Fig. 14.9 Titian, *The Glory*, oil on canvas, MNP, 1551–1554. Photo: after *El monasterio de Yuste* (Madrid: Fundación Caja Madrid, 2007), p. 137.

heaven. Most likely, the textual source for this work is a passage from the *Meditations* of the Pseudo-Augustine (1st Spanish ed. 1511) which narrates the celestial vision of the Blessed,[70] whose presence among Charles's books was reinforced by the gloss which Louis of Granada (1504–1588) wrote on it on his treatise *Of prayer and meditation* (1st ed. 1554), one of the favorite reads of the emperor and Philip II.

Some books inherited or acquired by Philip II from the library of his father had for him a dynastic meaning similar to this picture.[71] Such was the case of the devotional manuscripts, which, in addition, were indicators of prestige and courtly magnificence. As early as 1537, Pietro Aretino (1492–1556) confirmed Charles V's predilection for Renaissance-style illustrated manuscripts, which he especially appreciated because of their skilful miniatures and round humanistic script and not only for its classical roots, but also on account of its better readability.[72] One of his richest illuminated manuscripts was the so-called *Breviary of Charles V*, made up of four volumes *in folio* profusely illustrated with full-page miniatures, historiated capitals and borders.[73] This work gathered together in an accessible format different parts from books necessary for ceremonial and private prayer such as the hymnbook, lectionary, passionary, homiliary, and antiphonary, and it was especially appropriate for pictorial narration, since its division into pages and volumes encouraged a natural *dispositio*, an arrangement that had to be artificially procured with a real or simulated framework in media such as the altarpieces.

Like the Catholic Kings or Maximilian I, Charles V was very interested in his literal, heraldic or allegorical self-representation for propaganda purposes. There are plenty of works of art aimed at public dissemination that contain his portrait, but his distinctive profile can also be found in manuscripts and paintings intended for his private use. Some of the illustrations of the *Breviary of Charles V*, composed by Bernardino of Canderroa (*fl.* 1504–1518) and other Toledan masters, make direct reference to the emperor. Besides being depicted praying

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[70] Pseudo-Augustine, *Meditationum* 26. *PL* 40:920–921.

[71] Roger S. Wieck, *Painted Prayers. The Book of Hours in Medieval and Renaissance Art* (New York: George Braziller, 2004), pp. 19–20.

[72] Javier Docampo, "Imagen religiosa y devoción privada: los libros de oraciones de Carlos V," in *El Arte en las Cortes de Carlos V y Felipe II* (Madrid: CSIC, 1999), pp. 215–24.

[73] Javier Docampo, "El *Breviario de Carlos V*: Estudio del Códice y sus miniaturas," *Reales Sitios* 145 (2000), pp. 28–39.

in bust form, inscribed in some medallions with a bold numismatic sense, he emerges as *dramatis persona* in certain miniatures: entering Granada in an incarnation of his grandfather Ferdinand the Catholic (vol. 1, fol. 165v); playing the part of Caspar in the *Adoration of the Magi* (vol. 1, fol. 183v); or kneeling in prayer in a deliberate parallel with *The Agony in the Garden* (vol. 2, fols. 1v-2r), as a perfect diptych in which the heraldic borders show, respectively, Passion themes and other subjects from the life of David accompanied by allegories of the cardinal virtues. In this folio, Charles, clad in armor, kneels down as a paradigm of the *miles Christi* (soldier of Christ), holding the Cross in one hand and a shield with the Five Wounds in the other. Thus, he could *see* the fruits of his prayer in the third image that he asked to see before falling critically ill.

Another similar manuscript was the *Book of Hours of Charles V* (Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid), which he perused every morning assisted by his confessor.[74] (fig. 14.10) The value of this moralizing volume, composed in Paris in Latin and French in the late fifteenth or early sixteenth century, was twofold: dynastic—for its likely provenance (the estate of Philip the Fair or Margaret of Austria)[75]—and symbolic—because of the issues unfolded in its illustrations, a real encyclopedia in images, which suggests that the emperor should make an iconic use of this work, skimming through its miniatures rather than reading it. They comprised the *Creed*; the *Chronicle of David's life*; the *Three Living and the Three Dead*, the *Dance of Death* and the *Final Judgment*,[76] all of them extracted from the Office of the Dead and popularized since the mid-fourteenth century in the Burgundian court as a meditation on the Four Last Things and a warning against the dangers of vainglory.[77] Almost in the middle of the codex (pp. 176–177), a double-folio depicting *David slaying Goliath* opens the Penitential Psalms.[78] These were believed to have been composed by

[74] Sigüenza, *Historia* (see above, n. 67), 2, pp. 163–64.

[75] José Luis Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, *Regia Bibliotheca. El libro en la Corte española de Carlos V*, 2 vols. (Mérida: Editora Regional de Extremadura, 2005) 1, p. 325.

[76] Ana Domínguez Rodríguez, *Libros de Horas del siglo XV en la Biblioteca Nacional* (Madrid: Fundación Universitaria Española, 1979), pp. 82–105.

[77] Francesca Español Beltrán, *La imagen de lo macabro en el gótico hispano* (Madrid: Historia 16, 1992), p. 11.

[78] Anna Muntada Torrellas and Elisa Varela Rodríguez, eds., *Libro de Horas de Carlos V (Biblioteca Nacional—Vitr. 24.3)* (Madrid: Club Bibliófilo, 1999), 2, pp. 105–107.

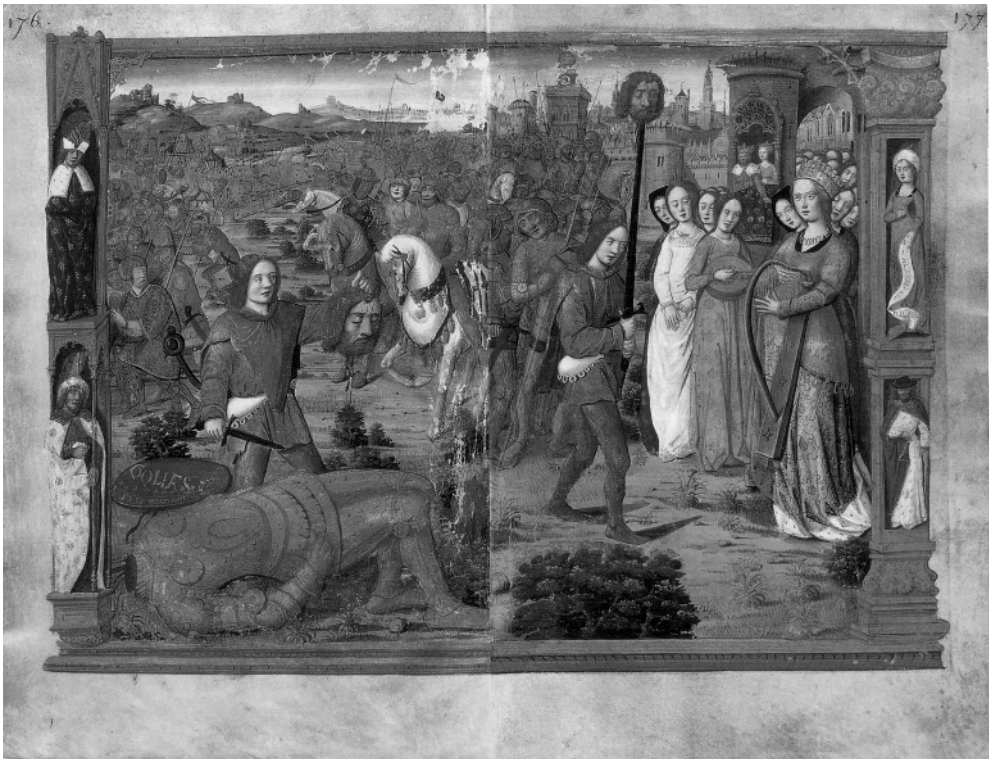

Fig. 14.10 Master of Petrarch's Triumphs, *David slaying Goliath* from the *Book of Hours of Charles V*, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid, MS Vitrina 24-3, pp. 176–177, late fifteenth-early sixteenth century. Photo: after *El monasterio de Yuste* (Madrid: Fundación Caja Madrid, 2007), p. 123.

King David, so it was usual to illustrate their opening with his image in many Books of Hours.

Since his formative years in the Low Countries, young Charles had a personal predilection for the Psalter. He included the Book of Psalms in his *Horæ* and owned several elucidations (comments) on the Psalter written by the Flemish theologian Frans Titelmans (1502–1537) and by his preacher, the Dominican friar Tomas of Portocarrero (*fl. c.* 1542). The psalmist himself was formulated by the imperial apologists as a *typus* or Biblical prefiguration of Charles V, in a programmatic exaltation of the messianic power of the emperor, chosen by God to guide his people just like David before him.[79] This association pleased

[79] Sandoval, *Historia* (see above, n. 54), 3, pp. 568–69.

Charles, who gladly adopted the name of David as a model and personal device.[80]

Philip II's private piety, from Counter-Reformation enforcement to penitential deprecation

While still alive, King David appointed his son Solomon as his heir, and bequeathed to him his wish that the Temple of God be built without fail. In a calculated analogy, the extensive panegyric literature on Philip II compared him with a new Solomon, founder of a new *Templum Escurialensis*.[81] Thus the consecrated monarch became a vicar of God on Earth, committed to guarantee the Christian unity of his kingdom and to preserve orthodoxy.[82] In order to support the Counter-Reformation cause, Philip envisioned the building of a grand edifice as a center for theological studies. The king himself selected the site and personally oversaw the progress of the project. After its completion in 1584, El Escorial would be governed by him as a microstate, as a version on a smaller scale of the Spanish Empire.[83]

The Andalusian humanist Diego de Villalta (1524–1615) recorded in his *Historia de la Peña de Martos* (*History of Martos' Cliff*), a manuscript dedicated to Philip II in 1579, that his majesty had chosen the temple and monastery of El Escorial in order to be able to devote a few hours to God in quietude, prayer, and contemplation, thus setting an example of a king deserving the title and reputation of the Catholic

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[80] Fernando Checa Cremades, "(Plus) Ultra Omnis solisque vias. La imagen de Carlos V en el reinado de Felipe II," *Cuadernos de Arte e Iconografía* 1/1 (1988), pp. 55–80.

[81] José Luis Gonzalo Sánchez-Molero, "Los orígenes de la imagen salomónica del Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo del Escorial," in *Literatura e imagen en El Escorial*, ed. Francisco Javier Campos y Fernández de Sevilla (San Lorenzo del Escorial: Instituto Escurialense de Investigaciones Históricas y Artísticas, 1996), pp. 722–49.

[82] Pierre Civil, "Le corps du Roi et son image. Une symbolique de l'État dans quelques représentations de Philippe II," in *Le corps comme métaphore dans l'Espagne des XVI^e^ et XVII^e^ siècles: du corps métaphorique aux métaphores corporelles*, ed. Augustin Redondo (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1992), pp. 11–29. See also José Pedro Paiva, "Spain and Portugal," in *A Companion to the Reformation World*, ed. Ronnie Po-chia Hsia (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), pp. 291–310.

[83] Anthony Pagden, "Instruments of Empire: Tommaso Campanella and the Universal Monarchy of Spain," in *Spanish Imperialism and the Political Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), pp. 37–63.

one.[84] The king wanted to build this edifice far outside of town so that when he wished to withdraw from the hustle and bustle of the court, the very place helped him to lift the soul in holy meditations, on which he was so keen and experienced. For these reasons, El Escorial would develop into the most solemn "oratory of his retirement," dissociated in gradual levels of privacy. At the end of these levels, within the center of the building were his private rooms and the royal oratory, where the monks saw the king throughout the day: in the morning, afternoon, and in the secrecy of night, engaged in "the exercise of vocal and mental prayer that sustained him throughout his life."[85] At other times his confessor celebrated private masses to administer communion.[86]

El Escorial was also conceived by the king as a *locus amœnus* (pleasant place), distant from the urban degradation of Madrid. There he could keep his heart far from vain thoughts and disordered passions, in order to reach the peace and purity that, according to the saints, were the aim of spiritual life.[87] Philip II's models of behavior were the saintly hermits and penitents, headed by Saint Anthony Abbot and followed by Saint Jerome and Mary Magdalene. (fig. 14.11) His chamber, whose original aspect cannot be reconstructed because of the paucity of the sources, was crammed with little images of saints, so that wherever he tossed and turned in his bed he felt comforted by their company.[88] The ubiquitous presence of these and other religious images all over the monastery refreshed the king's pious memory.[89] Some of

[84] Diego de Villalta, *Historia De la antiguedad y fundacion de la memorable Peña de Martos en la qual se trata del origen y principio de la clarissima columna que por Hercules el grande llamado el libyco fue edificada en la misma peña con las demas antiguedades y cosas notables Alli acontecidas*. San Lorenzo de El Escorial (Madrid), Real Biblioteca del Monasterio (hereafter RBME), MS &.III.15, fol. 6r.

[85] Sigüenza, *Historia* (see above, n. 67), 2, p. 436.

[86] Antonio Cervera de la Torre, *Testimonio avtentico, y verdadero de las cosas notables qve passaron en la dichosa muerte del Rey nuestro señor Don Phelipe segundo* (Valencia: Pedro Patricio Mey, 1599), p. 102.

[87] Louis of Granada, *Libro de la oracion y meditacion: En el qual se tracta de la Consideracion de los principales mysterios de nuestra Fe. Con otros tres breues tractados de la excellencia de las principales obras penitenciales: que son, Lymosna, Ayuno, y Oracion* (Antuerp: Christophe Plantin, 1572), 2nd part, p. 71.

[88] Sigüenza, *Historia* (see above, n. 67), 2, p. 607.

[89] Juan Luis González García, "Felipe II y la devoción acumulativa en El Escorial: El Templo de Salomón como *Kunstkammer* del rey-sacerdote," in *El Monasterio del Escorial y la Pintura*, ed. Francisco Javier Campos y Fernández de Sevilla (San Lorenzo del Escorial: Instituto Escurialense de Investigaciones Históricas y Artísticas, 2001), pp. 445–65.

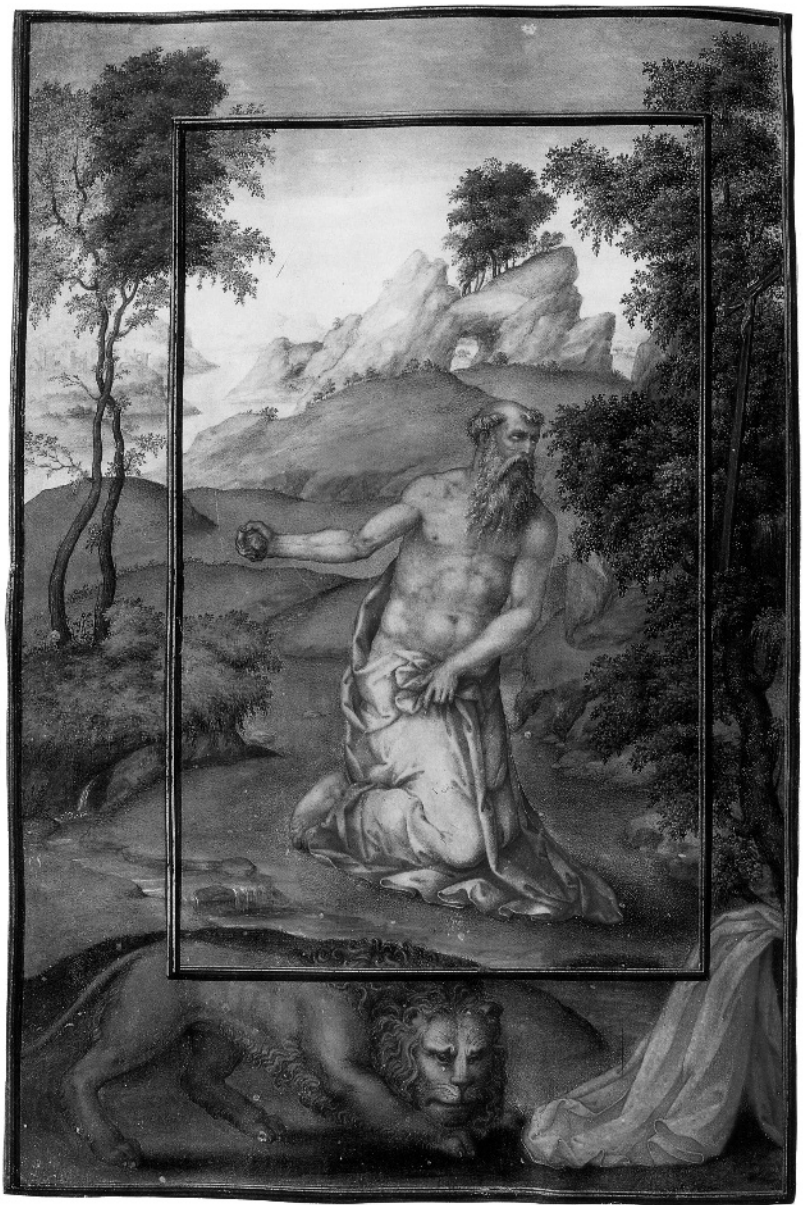

Fig. 14.11 Andrés de León and Julián de la Fuente el Saz, *St. Jerome in the wilderness* from the *Breviary of Philip II*, PN, San Lorenzo de el Escorial, Real Biblioteca del Monasterio, MS Vitrina 2, 1568. Photo: after Fernando Checa Cremades, *Felipe II. Mecenas de las artes* (Madrid: Nerea, 1992), p. 276.

them had the added quality of being relics[90] or being considered as such (like a *Crucifix* painted by Orazio Vecellio (*c.* 1528–1576)—given by his father, Titian, to Philip II—which was kept at the relics' chamber (1559, Monasterio de El Escorial).[91]

Friar Antonio Cervera de la Torre (d. 1606), Philip II's chaplain, also noticed this accumulative veneration, adding that besides saints' images, the king always had crucifixes and images of Virgin Mary before him on all sides of his room, which he used to pray and commend himself to God.[92] He did this exercise particularly after lunch and dinner, staying alone behind closed doors with a royal servant who placed a portable ebony oratory in front of him, where one could see a penitential crucifix and other images. Philip also demanded books for prayers and litanies he liked to be intoned every day. Many years before his death, he used to spend four and a half hours in prayer, sometimes five, between day and night time, but in the last moments of his illness he stopped requesting books, practicing solely mental prayer, "owing to his weakness."[93] He had a special devotion to the Virgin as well as to the Holy Souls in Purgatory and the Rosary.[94] To facilitate a focused presentation, these paintings were often covered by protective curtains or doors, so that the monarch could choose from the available repertoire the images to venerate during his retreat.

During prayer, the king directed his attention to the conversion of Mary Magdalene,[95] forgiven by Christ during the Feast in the house of Simon (Lk. 7.47–48). This episode is depicted by Juan de Flandes

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[90] Guy Lazure, "Possessing the Sacred: Monarchy and Identity in Philip II's Relic Collection at El Escorial," *Renaissance Quarterly* 60 (2007), pp. 58–93.

[91] See Gregorio de Andrés, "Descripción de los objetos artísticos y piadosos del Camarín de Santa Teresa del Escorial," *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños* 8 (1972), pp. 115–27, and Carmen García-Frías Checa, "El Camarín de Santa Teresa: una pequeña 'cámara de maravillas' del Monasterio de El Escorial," in *Monjes y Monasterios Españoles*, ed. Francisco Javier Campos y Fernández de Sevilla, 3 vols. (San Lorenzo del Escorial: Instituto Escurialense de Investigaciones Históricas y Artísticas, 1995), 1, pp. 135–60.

[92] Cervera de la Torre, *Testimonio* (see above, n. 86), p. 30.

[93] Cristóbal Pérez de Herrera, *Elogio a las esclarecidas virtvdes de la C.R.M. del Rey N. S. Don Felipe II, que està en el cielo, y de su exemplar y Christianissima muerte, y carta oratoria, al poderosissimo Rey de las Españas y Nueuo Mundo D. Felipe III. nuestro señor su muy amado hijo* (Valladolid: Luis Sánchez,1604), pp. 71–72.

[94] Pérez de Herrera, *Elogio*, pp. 93–95, 146.

[95] Cervera de la Torre, *Testimonio* (see above, n. 86), pp. 48–49, 99. On Magdalene's conversion as the first step for a penitential life, see Katherine Ludwig Jansen, *The Making of the Magdalen: Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 106–107.

in the *Polyptych of Isabella the Catholic*, which Philip II employed as a portable oratory when travelling. He also liked to meditate on the conversion of St. Matthew (Mt. 9.9) and St. Paul (Acts 9.1–30), and about other places of the Holy Scripture where God's mercy was shown. With this penitential attitude, he used to read the parables of the Lost Drachma (Lk. 15. 8–10), the Prodigal Son (Lk. 15.11–32) and the Healing of the Paralytic at Capernaum (Mt. 9.2; Mk. 2.5), in addition to the Passion according to SS. Matthew and John.[96]

As well as introspection, the steps to access the exercise of "inward thinking" involved—according to St. John of Ávila, another daily reading for the king in the 1595 edition—"praying vocally, vpon the partes of the passion; and so praying, let them thinke (although it be but breifely [*sic*]) of that particuler [*sic*] mystery. And let them haue some deuout picture to behould [*sic*]; and let them read some deuout books of the passion."[97] The panel of *The Seven Deadly Sins and the Four Last Things* (*c.* 1490, Museo Nacional del Prado) by Bosch was kept in the king's study at El Escorial, which by mid-seventeenth century was "still furnished with a desk, and books of devotion, like the monastic cells." "The sides of the alcove" were also "full of small statues of saints;" and on the outside "some very beautiful portraits of our Lady, and other religious pieces…"[98] Sigüenza described this "excellent panel," aware of its mirroring, panoptic functions and the "circle of light and glory" that enclosed the Redeemer, surrounded by the Seven Deadly Sins "*con que le ofenden todas las criaturas que Él redimió, sin considerar que los está mirando y que lo ve todo*" ("with which the creatures He redeemed offend Him, without considering He is watching them and sees everything").[99] This sort of piety, which can be traced back to Isabella the Catholic's devotion for the Holy Face, is best illustrated by the painting of *Christ on the Way to Calvary* by Titian, which hung in

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[96] Cervera de la Torre, *Testimonio*, pp. 47–49, 59, 127.

[97] See John of Ávila, *The Avdi Filia, or a Rich Cabinet Fvll of Spritvall Ievvells*, trans. L.T. [Sir T. Matthew] ([St. Omer]: *s. n.*, 1620), p. 418, literally repeated by Louis of Granada, *Libro de la oracion* (see above, n. 87), 2nd part, pp. 678–79.

[98] Francisco de los Santos, *A Description of the Royal Palace and Monastery of St. Laurence, called The Escurial; and of the Chapel Royal and Pantheon*, trans. George Thompson (London: Dryden Leach, 1760), p. 254.

[99] Sigüenza, *Historia* (see above, n. 67), 2, p. 678. On the penitential uses of this painting, see the introductory pages of Laura D. Gelfand, "Social Status and Sin: Reading Bosch's Prado *Seven Deadly Sins and Four Last Things*," in *The Seven Deadly Sins: From Communities to Individuals*, ed. Richard Newhauser (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007), pp. 229–56.

a privileged place in Philip II's private oratory (1565, Museo Nacional del Prado). Again in words of José de Sigüenza, "*en las noches pasaba allí el pío rey don Felipe buenos ratos, contemplando lo mucho que debía al Señor, que tan pesada Cruz llevaba sobre sus hombros por los pecados de los hombres y los suyos* "("at night, the devout King Philip would spend lengthy periods there, meditating on how much he owed to Christ who bore such a heavy weight on his shoulders for the sins of man and his sin").[100]

Philip II was convinced that he had the divine mission to govern his subjects like a righteous and prudent king and to uphold the purity of Catholic faith. When necessary he invoked his dual condition of both as *rex et sacerdos* to increase and promote religious orders, ecclesiastics, and monasteries of nuns, looking after their retreat and recollection.[101] The pictorial translation of this defense of Church servants could be seen in the Royal Alcazar of Madrid, in *Religion succored by Spain*, by Titian (1572–75, Museo Nacional del Prado), which was in the oratory of the palace.[102] Here a naked female figure (Religion) is threatened by serpents who wish to poison her purity. She is attended by Spain, armed as Pallas Athena, who holds up the shield with the arms of Philip II. He also commissioned a monumental *ex voto* from Titian in thanks for the gifts he had received that year of 1571: the defeat of the Turkish fleet at Lepanto and the birth of the Infante Ferdinand, heir to the throne (*Philip II offering the Infante Don Ferdinand to Heaven*, Museo Nacional del Prado, 1573–75).[103]

Among the virtues of the ideal Christian prince, the necessity of merging active and contemplative life was repeatedly endorsed by St. Teresa of Jesus (1515–1582) and Louis of Granada, two of the favorite spiritual readings of Philip II.[104] Such is the meaning of Mother Teresa's famous dictum that "the Lord walks among the pots and pans,"

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[100] Sigüenza, *Historia*, 2, p. 672.

[101] Carmelo Lisón Tolosana, *La imagen del Rey: monarquía, realeza y poder ritual en la Casa de los Austrias* (Madrid: Espasa Calpe, 1991), pp. 95–96, 103–106.

[102] Francisco Javier Sánchez Cantón, ed., *Inventarios Reales. Bienes muebles que pertenecieron a Felipe II*, 2 vols. (Madrid: Real Academia de la Historia, 1956–1959), 1, p. 27; 2, p. 397.

[103] Miguel Morán Turina, "El rostro impasible del rey," *Arte y Parte* 12 (1997–1998), pp. 52–58.

[104] Teresa of Jesus, *Los libros* (see above, n. 60), *Camino de perfección*, pp. 68–69. Cf. Louis of Granada, *Sermon segundo de las excelençias, y virtudes de la oracion*. RBME, MS &.III.21, fols. 311v–319v, and Louis of Granada, *Libro de la oracion* (see above, n. 87), 2nd part, p. 82.

customarily misinterpreted in a pantheist sense, which reaches full consistency when quoting this advice to her nuns in its entirety: "*quando la obediençia os truxere empleadas en cosas esteriores entended que si es en la cozina entre los pucheros anda el Señor aiudandoos en lo interior y exterior*" ("when obedience has you occupied in exterior things, know that if it is in the kitchen, *the Lord walks among the pots and pans*, helping you both internally and externally").[105] If the continuous, accumulative remembrance of God was an aid to Philip's devotion, the individual's transcendence through asceticism and reflection on one's personal role in the world articulated an ideal of penitential self-knowledge for his majesty.[106]

At the Alcazar, some works were precisely intended to arouse penitential feelings. The *Ecce Homo* and *The Virgin Dolorosa with her Hands Apart*, painted on marble by Titian for Charles V, through the touching vividness of Christ's suffering and the despairing gestures of the Virgin expressed an emotional pathos to stimulate the viewer's empathy, with a pietistic tone sought by the emperor and his son. Charles took the *Ecce Homo* to his retirement at Yuste, pairing it with a lost *Virgin Dolorosa* by Michiel Coxcie. Philip II paired the *Ecce Homo* with the aforementioned *Dolorosa* by Titian in his *aposento* (chamber) in the Alcazar after 1574. Both paintings share a religious sensibility closer to the northern type (which influenced Spanish art) rather than to the Italian one. Particularly notable in *The Virgin Dolorosa* are the tears, absent in earlier works by Titian. These are the tears of a mother for her son's suffering, but also tears of supplication and intercession in favor of the devout spectators, in this case Charles V and Philip II. This is how Titian himself explained to Philip the significance of the tears on the face of *The Magdalene* which he sent to him in 1561.[107] (figs. 14.12, 14.13) There was a similar pair of *Ecce Homo* and *Dolorosa* in the same chamber, slightly larger and painted on canvas by Titian as well, but also lost, which proves the special devotion of the king towards this iconographic coupling.[108]

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[105] Teresa of Jesus, *Avisos para las cosas de la oracion es muy prouechoso para los que andan en cosas actiuas*. RBME, MS d.III.25, fols. 87r-90r. Emphasis mine.

[106] Juan Luis González García, "La sombra de Dios: *Imitatio Christi* y contrición en la piedad privada de Felipe II," in *Felipe II. Un Príncipe del Renacimiento*, ed. Fernando Checa Cremades (Madrid: Sociedad Estatal para la Conmemoración de los Centenarios de Felipe II y Carlos V, 1998), pp. 185–201.

[107] Mancini, *Tiziano* (see above, n. 68), pp. 269–70.

[108] Sánchez Cantón, *Inventarios Reales* (see above, n. 102), 1, pp. 26–27.

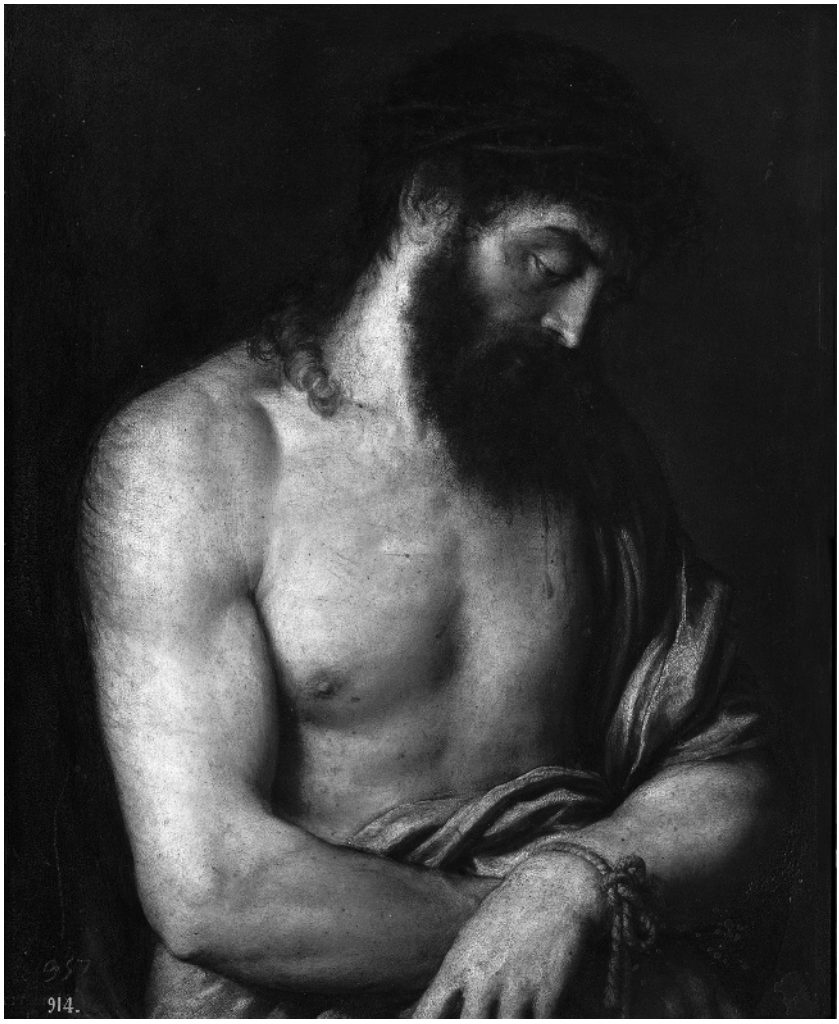

Fig. 14.12 Titian, *Ecce Homo*, oil on marble, MDP, *c*. 1546. Photo: after *El monasterio de Yuste* (Madrid: Fundación Caja Madrid, 2007), p. 174.

Closely viewed, the devotional artworks by Bosch or Titian were part of Philip II's world and departed, at the same time, from daily temporality. Aided and commented on by texts, the imaginative method of praying did not exclude delight, and among its purposes was to produce a direct action on the spirit using emotive formulae. King Philip, very interested in the literate perception of the artistic work, thus replicated and combined religious paintings by his favorite artists

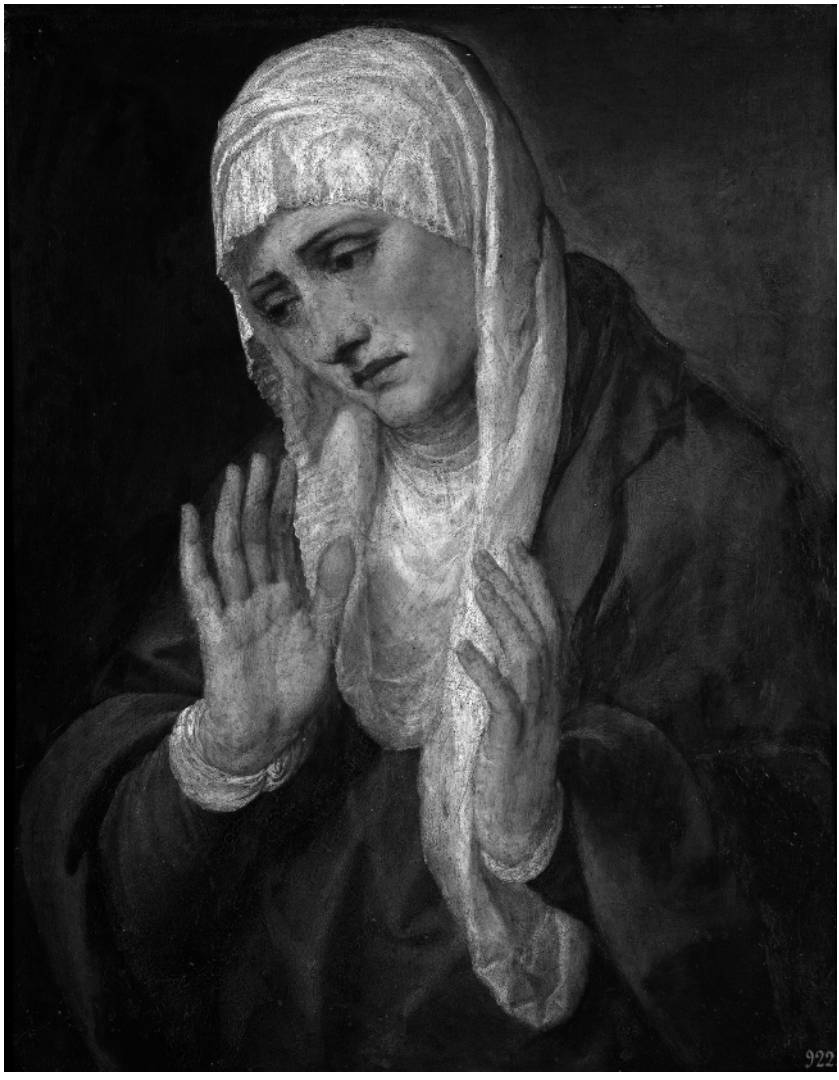

Fig. 14.13 Titian, *The Virgin Dolorosa with her Hands Apart*, oil on marble, MDP, 1555. Photo: after *El monasterio de Yuste* (Madrid: Fundación Caja Madrid, 2007), p. 177.

in locations not strictly religious, bringing together devotion and aesthetic appreciation.[109]

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By examining specific books and paintings I have considered how responses to imagery were supported by texts with specific rhetorical structures, and how images simultaneously reinforced the verbal messages. Visual and textual media interacted to activate the imagination and moved the devout Spanish monarchs so that they could experience the time, space and emotions of the sacred things depicted. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, most directors of spirituality were famous preachers as well.[110] In fact, it can be considered that the usual distinction between preaching and the so-called *misticismo* is largely artificial, since numerous meditative texts had their origin in sermons or homilies, which nevertheless is totally logical, given that any religious writer who then tried to address a secular audience would draw, consciously or unconsciously, on his practical experience in the pulpit and deliver his doctrine in the accustomed manner. Abundant in exhortations and admonitions, the literary style of these authors, as clearly discernible as their tone, was highly subjective, visual, and emotional.[111] Complemented by the use of devotional paintings, the subtle, always complex relationships between word and image, would find one of their best expressions in the royal private piety of Renaissance Spain.

[109] Fernando Checa Cremades, *Felipe II. Mecenas de las artes* (Madrid: Nerea, 1992), p. 410.

[110] Alan D. Deyermond, "The Sermon and its Uses in Medieval Castilian Literature," *La Corónica* 8/2 (1980), pp. 127–45.

[111] Giuseppina Ledda, "Predicar a los ojos," *Edad de Oro* 8 (1989), pp. 129–42.

PART V

REFLECTIONS IN MIRRORS, WALLS, AND INTERSTICES

15. THE FAIREST OF THEM ALL: REFLECTIONS ON SOME FOURTEENTH-CENTURY MIRRORS

Alexa Sand

The mirror was among the most pervasive metaphors in medieval literature, art, and theology.[1] And like all such metaphors, it was pliable: there were metaphorical mirrors that claimed to reflect the nature of the sensible world at large, mirrors for moral reflection and correction, mirrors for princes, and mirrors in which the life of Christ was metaphorically viewed. Mirrors also denoted vice: lust, vanity, and delusional delight in the things of this world could be indicated by a mirror, even while the Pauline formulation that "we see now as in a mirror but darkly," suggested that the distorted view of heaven available to us in this life is preferable to no view at all. Amidst all of this, too, there were actual, physical objects with a reflective surface used, among other things, for personal grooming. All this metaphorical baggage attached to mirrors and the act of looking into

[1] The operative metaphor of the mirror had a long and distinguished history in Christian spiritual discourse and literary production, beginning, of course, with Paul's formulation in 1 Corinthians 13.12; as Marcia Colish noted, "Medieval Christians…always distinguished the reflection of God in the mirror of faith from God himself," and then framed this metaphor in terms of "a sign theory conceived in expressly verbal terms." *The Mirror of Language: A Study in the Medieval Theory of Knowledge* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), p. ix. Ritamary Bradley observed that the medieval concept of the literary mirror perhaps had less to do with Paul's *speculum in enigmate* and more to do with a figurative conception in which the mirror serves as a spiritual paragon, a figure she traced back to Augustine's commentary on Psalm 103. "Backgrounds of the Title *Speculum* in Mediaeval Literature," *Speculum*, 29.1 (1954), pp. 100–15. Indeed, the choice of the title *Speculum* for the leading English-language journal of medieval studies indicates the centrality and near universality of the metaphor to modern understandings of the Middle Ages, a phenomenon wittily meditated upon by Judith Bennett in her contribution to the special issue of the journal dedicated to feminist studies in 1993. "Medievalism and Feminism" *Speculum*, 68/2 (1993), pp. 309–31. Other useful sources of information on the development of the mirror metaphor in medieval literary and visual representation are Herbert Grabes, *Speculum, Mirror und Looking Glass in den Buchtiteln des Mittelalters und der englischen Literature des 13 bis 17 Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Max Niemayer, 1973), and Paula Hancock, "Transformations in the Iconography of the Mirror in Medieval Art," (PhD diss., Emory University, 1988), pp. 80–231. I thank Ingeborg Krueger of the Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn for directing me to these and other useful sources on the history of medieval mirrors and mirror-imagery.

them must at times have weighed heavy on one's interactions with such an object, introducing an element of unease. Yet mirrors were, throughout the medieval and early modern periods, coveted possessions, and like many things prized by people in the centuries before the Enlightenment, they were enmeshed in a semiotic web woven of both spiritual and mundane values. Previous scholarship has demonstrated that the iconography of particular mirror cases opened the way for simultaneously sensual and spiritual understandings.[2] This essay looks at fourteenth-century Parisian mirror cases more generally and asks how their owners and users might have integrated them into their larger visual experience and awareness of mirror-metaphors, particularly in light of the emphasis placed, in the first half of the fourteenth century, on the devotional subject of the visible face of God.

Essentially, my argument here is that while the basic purpose of the mirror as an object was to facilitate personal grooming and the aesthetic evaluation of one's own appearance and its secondary function was to announce its bearer's social status, this business was so deeply involved in other sorts of metaphysical concerns as to be inextricable. The user of an ivory-backed mirror of the sort I will be discussing here could not have engaged with such an object without also engaging, at some level of awareness, with the complex of associations, spiritual and imaginative, embedded in its function as a reflective surface, its form, and the iconography of its non-reflective parts. In terms of the concerns of this volume, one might say that the "push" came from the desire to make use of the mirror's fundamental property of reflection and its status as a social marker, while the "pull" arose from its unavoidable association with some of the urgent questions about personal identity, salvation, and the role of vision in the relationship between the individual and the world that were particularly pressing to Europeans in the later Middle Ages. My method for this argument is to look first at how the mirrors themselves were made, then at how their particular form connected them to other varieties of visual experience,

[2] Examples include Alcuin Blamires, "The 'Religion of Love' in Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* and Medieval Visual Art" in ed. K.J. Höltgen *et al., Word and Visual Imagination: Studies in the Interaction of English Literature and the Visual Arts* (Erlangen: Universitätsbiliothek, 1988), pp. 20–21; M. Camille, *The Medieval Art of Love* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1998), pp. 111–12; Susan Smith, "The Gothic Mirror and the Female Gaze" in eds. Jane Carroll, Alison Stewart, *Saints, Sinners, and Sisters: Gender and Northern Art in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, (Burlington and Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), pp. 73–93.

and finally (and most importantly) at how the iconography and style of the mirror cases, often described as simply "courtly" and "romantic," stress themes of struggle and conquest that align with trends in contemporary devotional texts and images for the laity that develop the idea that spiritual advancement should be fraught with difficulty, and that transcendent vision comes only at the cost of great struggle.

Mirrors of one sort or another date back to the Neolithic period, and by classical antiquity were widely produced in materials as diverse as onyx, bronze, copper, silver, gold, and, by the third century CE, included glass with a reflective metallic backing.[3] Medieval mirrors were the direct descendents of these Greek and Roman examples in both form and technology. Highly polished metal surfaces vied with glass as the reflective material of choice up to the seventeenth century: metal provided a less distorted image while glass gave greater brilliance and clarity of hue.[4] Ingeborg Krueger's work has shown that the commonly-held view that all medieval glass mirrors were cut from a sphere of blown glass may even be flawed: based on archival and archeological evidence, she argues that flat-glass mirrors were being manufactured in Germany long before their supposed "invention" in fifteenth-century Venice.[5] Examples of both metal and glass mirrors survive from across the Middle Ages, and include framed mirrors, two-handled mirrors, mirrors with a backing meant to be held in the palm of the hand, stand-mirrors, and mirrors that can be closed within a capsule. Mirror settings could be fashioned from wood, ivory, bone, metal, or even leather. The size and quality of the mirror itself could vary widely. Small fragments of mirror were embedded in pilgrimage badges and souvenirs, and could not have been very costly, while larger mirrors made of both metal and glass were valuable commodities that signaled their owners' high economic status.

Different styles prevailed at different times and places: in early fourteenth-century France, the most common surviving type is the ivory mirror case with one (or occasionally two) valve(s), enclosing a small, circular reflective surface. These surfaces are almost universally

[3] An excellent summary of the history of the mirror in pre-modern times is given by Sabine Melchior-Bonnet, *The Mirror: A History*, trans. K. Jewett (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 9–18.

[4] Melchior-Bonnet, *The Mirror*, p. 16.

[5] Ingeborg Krueger, "Glasspiegel im Mittelalter: Fakten, Funde und Fragen," *Bonner Jahrbücher* 190 (1990), pp. 233–313, and "Glasspiegel im Mittelalter II: Neue Funde und neue Fragen," *Bonner Jahrbücher* 195 (1995), pp. 209–48.

lost, and scholars tend to disagree about whether the original contents of the cases were glass or metal without presenting much hard evidence—however, as Krueger has demonstrated through painstaking study of extant mirror surfaces, glass was the preferred material in this period across northern Europe, recent developments in its manufacture having improved the quality of its reflection.[6] The cases themselves are typically circular, perhaps because the mirrors placed within them were this shape as a result of the way in which they were made, being cut from a blown sphere. On many of these ivory cases, figural terminals at the corners square the circle, so that a person holding the mirror might grip it by the edge without smudging the reflective surface. Originally, a mirror case was usually composed of two hinged ivory valves, though it is rare to find these intact or even in the same collection. These intimately scaled objects might best be described as pocket- or hand-mirrors, though the terminals made it possible to prop them on a shelf, and some were pierced so that they could be hung on a wall or on one's belt as jewelry.[7] Their diminutive size should be noted: one of the largest of the extant examples measures just fourteen centimeters in diameter (Paris, Musée National du Moyen Age, Thermes de Cluny *c.* 1404), and many are smaller. The luxuriousness of their materials (ivory being even more valuable than mirrored glass) along with the subject matter of the carvings on the outside of the cases speak to their audience; the wealthy, cultivated, and courtly (or aspiring to be courtly) classes.[8] While archival evidence suggests that men, as well as women, owned such mirrors, it is often assumed that these were primarily women's objects.[9] Certainly, mir-

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[6] Krueger, 1990, pp. 233–313; and 1995, pp. 215–16.

[7] Richard H. Randall Jr., "Popular Romances Carved in Ivory," *Images In Ivory: Precious Objects of the Gothic Age* ed. Peter Barnett (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 63–79.

[8] The class-aspirational value of mirror-cases as social signifiers, as well as their religious implications, are evident in pilgrim-souvenirs that take their form. I am grateful to Sarah Blick for drawing my attention to these objects, associated with Canterbury as a pilgrimage center. One example is illustrated in Michael Mitchiner, *Medieval Pilgrim and Secular Badges* (London: Hawkins Publications, 1986), p. 50, figs. 72–73.

[9] For evidence of mirror ownership, see R. Koechlin, *Les Ivoires Gothiques Françaises*, 3 vols. (Paris: Picard, 1924), vol. 1, pp. 370–71. In her perceptive essay on women and mirrors in the Gothic period, Susan Smith acknowledges that "Medieval inventories list men as well as women as owners of mirrors," though her particular interest is with "testing the nature of the viewing activity that mirrors encouraged against the period's normative expectations concerning women's use of their eyes." Smith, "The Gothic Mirror," pp. 75–76.

rors were gendered feminine in the literature and art of the period, but like the Book of Hours, similarly "feminine," they were handled, used, and seen by men and women alike. The iconography of the relief carvings, as well as the business of self-grooming were relevant to both sexes in the highly image-conscious court and urban milieus of the period; that such concerns were thought of as feminine did not exclude males from participation in them, masculinity then, as now, being a complex performance.

The vast majority of the many surviving Parisian mirror cases from the period of about 1300–1350 depict scenes best described as drawn from the realm of romance, broadly defined as the narrative, often heavily allegorized, literature (mostly in the vernacular) of courtship and courtliness.[10] Koechlin distinguished between more literary scenes that reference specific, often identifiable episodes from medieval romances, and more generic scenes of gallantry, though I am not certain this division makes sense in terms of what might be called the attitude of *courtoisie* that informs all these scenes, whether they can be identified as representing a narrative moment or not.[11] At its very heart, this is an attitude concerned with sexual and amatory relations, with the aesthetic senses, and with a code of morality somewhat at odds in its emphasis on worldly honor and physical love with such core Christian values as humility and chastity. Lovers, their travails more than their idylls, are the subjects of these mirror cases, whether they represent specific, recognizable literary episodes more generalized scenes of courting. A particularly delicious example is the ivory mirror case of about 1350 now at the Metropolitan Museum in New York that depicts a mounted couple setting out for a falconry hunt: the lady pensively fondles the hood on her falcon while the lover draws close enough to put his hand around her shoulders. (fig. 15.1) Their mounted companions seem more earnest about the business

[10] This definition is meant only to characterize the types of texts that the mirror case imagery might have called to mind for medieval audiences; it of course vastly oversimplifies the genre, or more properly put, genres, that constitute later medieval romance. Definitions of romance as a genre range from those that stress its idealizing and anti-realist properties (e.g., John Stevens' *Medieval Romance: Themes and Approaches* (London: Hutchinson University Library, 1973), pp. 13–28), to those that focus on its narrative technique and structure (the work of Norris Lacy), to those that highlight its social and historical embeddedness (e.g., Joseph Duggan, *The Romances of Chrétien de Troyes* (New Haven: Yale, 2001).

[11] Koechlin, *Les Ivoires Gothiques Français*, volume 1, p. 391.

Fig. 15.1 Mirror Back with Falconing Party, Paris, *c.* 1350–1375. Elephant ivory, 4 3/8 × 4 1/8 × 7/16 in (11.1 × 10.4 × 1.1 cm), diameter: 4 in (10.1 cm). Photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

of hunting, one sounding his horn and the other luring his falcon. The contrast between the amorous dealings in the foreground and the crowded, woodland scene of the serious hunters in the background establishes narrative tension similar to passages in medieval romance where courtship is set against more workaday concerns, a sort of psychological realm apart. This critical tension is not incidental to the operation of these objects as bridges between bodily seeing and spiritual awareness.

Because the predominant visual concern of these mirror cases is to evoke the sensibility of courting, and often, too, its sensuality, it is easy to imagine that in turning to the reflective surface of the mirror itself, users were encouraged to think about the act of gazing at ones' own

image and perhaps cosmetically improving upon it as continuous, in some way, with the business of courtship and the aesthetics of courtliness. Without denying this likely scenario, I think that it is critical to stop and consider how the very nature of a mirrored reflection would trouble the viewer's experience of such continuity. The idealized lovers of the carved surface are always viewed from a distance great enough that we see their whole bodies and often a great deal of their surroundings, but the reflection in a mirror of such small dimensions as these cases contained can only be partial; a feature of a face, or perhaps the whole face, at most. Furthermore, whereas the figures on the carved surface are fixed forever in time and space, the reflection is transient and temporal. The lovers, arrested in youth and at that moment of courtship where the sexual tension that precedes fulfillment is at its height, are immune to the factors that might affect the reflected face; anxiety, anticipation, remorse, sleeplessness, blemishes, wrinkles, gray hairs… In other words, a great distance opens between the reflection and the carved back of the mirror.

Adding to this distance, the larger verbal and visual discourse about mirrors infused acts of self-perception in a reflective surface with moral ambiguity. On the one hand, both literature and the pictorial arts often represented mirrors as indices of iniquity: this was the view in which the deceptive qualities of reflection (for instance its reversal of left and right) pointed toward its moral falsity.[12] On the other hand, the mirror was one of the essential metaphors of Christian mysticism, in which the soul could be understood as a mirror of God, or alternatively, all of Creation could be understood as a chain of reflections leading toward the divine.[13] Theological and literary invocations of the mirror, therefore, ran the gamut from moral condemnation to transcendent rapture, and were employed to ends as diverse as admonition, crude titillation, and satire. And to this barrage of historical associations one must also add the psychological and psychosomatic aspects of mirror-gazing; as psychoanalytic theory has long proposed and neuropsychological research has more recently demonstrated, the act of looking at one's own reflection triggers a chain of mental events that heighten consciousness of relations between body, self, and other,

[12] Melchior-Bonnet, *The Mirror*, pp. 104–108.
[13] Melchior-Bonnet, *The Mirror*, pp. 108–15; Grabes, *Speculum, mirror*, pp. 92–95.

and the profound strangeness of the self to the self.[14] To look in the mirror is to ask a question fundamental to the relation between the self and the world, to express uncertainty: this is why, in the fairy tale of Snow White, the Queen, putatively the most beautiful woman in the kingdom, asks, "Who is the fairest of them all?" instead of consulting her truth-telling mirror on other, less personal matters.[15]

In addition to the literary, religious, and psychological intertexts that informed the fourteenth-century experience of looking into mirrors, visual referents also complicated matters. Depictions of mirrors—that is to say, paintings and sculptures that specifically denote the form and function of the mirror without actually incorporating a true reflective surface—are relatively abundant in the art of the late Gothic period. In illustrations of the virtues and the vices—a popular subject in glass, sculpture, and painting—Luxuria, lust, habitually carries a mirror as an attribute of her deceptiveness and self-regard. An illumination from Gervais de Bus' *Roman de Fauvel* (*c.* 1316–20) depicts *Charnalité*, Luxuria's vernacular sister, as a beautiful young woman, seated and gazing at a circular mirror. (fig. 15.2) The mortal perils of mirror-gazing are figured more brutally in a marginal figure from a north-French Psalter dated to the first decade of the fourteenth century; here a skeleton holds up a mirror and presumably admires its own reflection. (fig. 15.3) The association between mirrors and death was deep rooted in medieval culture: an early fifteenth century sermon first compares its auditors to "sacks of filth" and then invites them to "Set up this mirror, your mortal body, before your eyes. Remember that you will die, for memory of death will make you know yourself."[16]

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[14] The psychoanalytic departure point is of course Jacques Lacan, "The Mirror Stage as Formative of the Function of the *I* as revealed in Psychoanalytic Experience," *Ecrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sherridan (New York: Norton, 1977), pp. 1–7. For an accessible summary of recent research on the neuropsychological implications and uses of mirrors, see Natalie Angier, "Mirrors Don't Lie. Mislead? Oh, Yes," *New York Times*, July 22, 2008 (online edition: http://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/22/science/22angi.html?scp=1&sq=mirrors%20self%20perception&st=cse, accessed 3/2/09).

[15] An informative reading of "Snow White" that employs Lacanian mirror-stage theory but advances a humanist perspective in which the experiences of mothering a daughter are central to the story is put forward by Shuli Barzilai, "Reading 'Snow White': The Mother's Story" *Signs* 15 (1990), pp. 515–34, particularly 529–30.

[16] Patrick Horner, ed. and trans., *A Macaronic Sermon Collection from Late Medieval England: Oxford, MS Bodeley 649* (Oxford: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies and the Bodleian Library, 2006), sermon 22, p. 470. Sarah Blick also drew my attention to the fifteenth-century tomb of John Baret (d. 1462) at Bury St.-Edmunds, described in David A. Hinton, *Gold and Gilt, Pots and Pins: Possessions and People in Medieval*

Fig. 15.2 "Charnalité" (Luxuria), from Gervais de Bus, *Roman de Fauvel*, Paris, 1316–1320, BN ms. fr. 146, fol. 12. Photo: Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France.

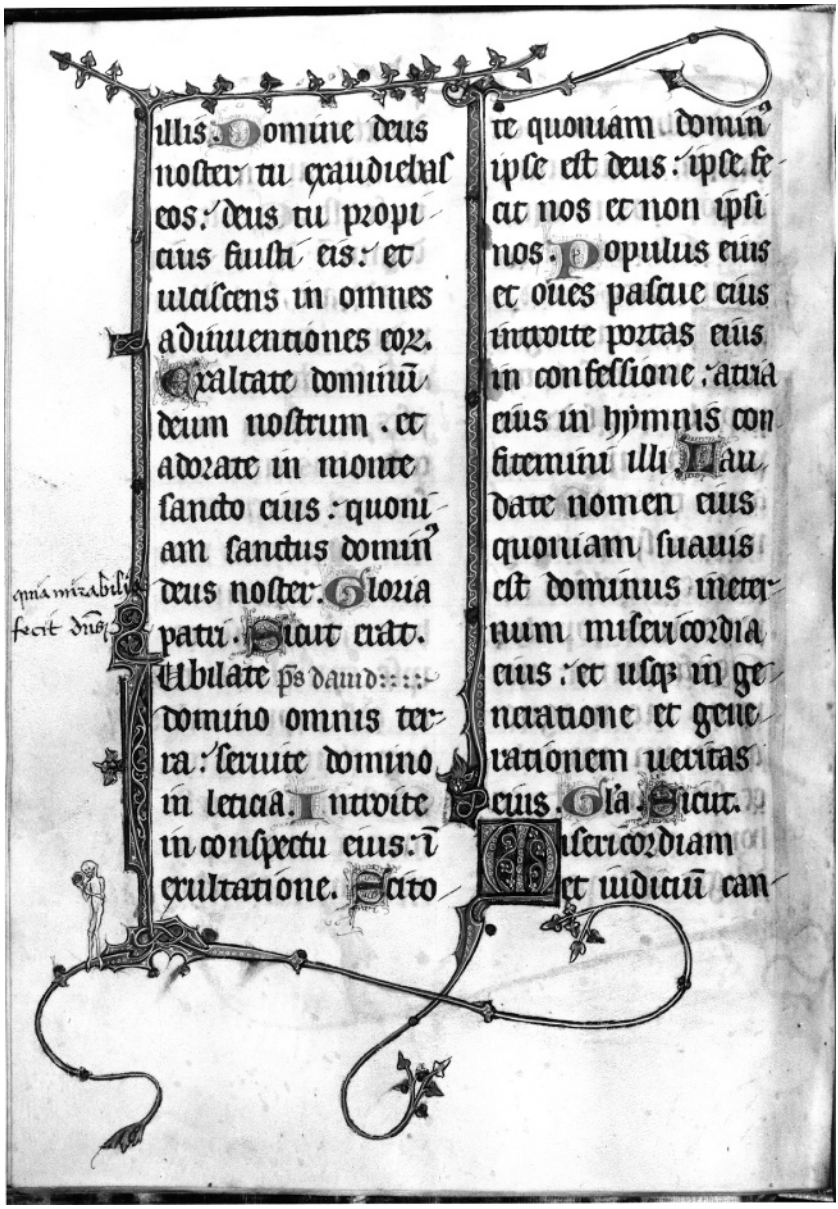

Fig. 15.3 Skeleton and mirror, detail from the margin of a psalter, Northern France, *c.* 1300–1310. Photo by permission of the Pierpont Morgan Library.

Earlier still, a fourteenth-century exemplum has a maidservant bring her mistress a skull in place of a mirror, when the latter rejects an ordinary mirror as not showing a true reflection of herself.[17]

Another implication of mirror gazing is figured in miniatures that depict the stages of human development–a genre of instructional literature and illustration very current among the educated classes of the fourteenth century.[18] In the *De Lisle Hours* (English, *c.* 1316–31), the Hours of the Virgin are idiosyncratically illustrated with a scheme of eight Ages of Man, rather than the usual events from the life of the Virgin or the Passion.[19] In each miniature, an ageless female figure probably personifies Reason and engages in dialogue with a male figure that progressively ages. Banderoles held by each figure denote their dialogue. The second and third ages, boyhood and youth, appear at lauds and prime. In the second age, (fig. 15.4) Reason asks, "Kay remines tu beu pire?" "What do you trace of God the Father?" and the boy (who despite his mature height must represent the stage of life between seven and fourteen) responds "Si Iesu beus ea line," "I am descended from beautiful Jesus," while combing his hair and gazing into a mirror. Though the gesture and words on one level imply childish vanity, they also draw a connection between the physical beauty of the child and that of Christ himself. Childhood as a signifier of spiritual innocence is of course an idea embedded in the gospels themselves, for instance, in Matthew 18:3, where Christ teaches, "Unless you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," comparing the faithful to "little ones."[20] The mirror in this image, then, might be understood less as a symbol of worldliness, error, sensuality, and death than as an index of spiritual truth. The

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Britain (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 248. The gisant, in the form of a decaying cadaver, faces a vault bespangled with mirrors, eternally reflecting back the abject state of his mortal body.

[17] This exemplum is cited as occurring in a "fourteenth century manual of devotional instruction," but unfortunately not otherwise attributed, in Paul Binski, *Medieval Death: Ritual and Representation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), p. 158.

[18] On the Ages of Man in the fourteenth century, see J.A. Burrow, *The Ages of Man: A Study in Medieval Writing and Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 40–48; Elizabeth Sears *The Ages of Man: Medieval Interpretations of the Life Cycle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 134–52.

[19] Sears, *The Ages of Man*, pp. 138–39 briefly describes the cycle in full. It is also analyzed by Susanna Greer Fein, "Life and Death, Reader and Page: Mirrors of Mortality in English Manuscripts," *Mosaic* 35 (2002), pp. 69–94 *passim*, fig. 3.

[20] All Biblical citations refer to the Douay-Rheims edition.

Fig. 15.4 The second age of man, Lauds of the Virgin, the DeLisle Hours, England, *c*. 1316–1331, Ms. G.50, fol. 29. Photo: by permission of the Pierpont Morgan Library.

idealized faith of boyhood reflected in the mirror is the face of true belief. That the youth in the third age at prime—still gazing in the mirror—says that he sees his own heart further suggests that these mirrors are not instruments of vanity, but of insight.[21] This mirror seems to figure the self-examination that must precede confession in fourteenth-century writing on the subject; as such, it provides a visible trace of God's all-seeing eye, which sees the soul as it truly is long before the soul itself can achieve that perception, an idea much discussed in confessional treatises of the period.[22]

This two-way mirror is also present in the famous allegorical diagram of the Ten Ages of Man from the *Psalter of Robert de Lisle*. (fig. 15.5) The roundel dedicated to the second age depicts a boy combing his hair and gazing into a circular mirror, very similar to the second age in the *De Lisle Hours*. The titutlus (which the scribe has mistakenly copied into the subsequent roundel) explains "Vita decens seculi speculo probatur," "A life worthy of the world is tested by the mirror."[23] This seems to suggest that self-scrutiny, perhaps allegorized here by the physical act of gazing in the mirror, is a critical part of the moral education of the young. In the fourth depicted age, the flower of young manhood, where the youth now rides a horse and holds a falcon on his hand, the titulus proclaims, "Non ymago speculi, set vita letatur," "Not the mirror's image, but life itself delights." The typical aristocratic pastime of hunting stands for "life itself," and would seem to be entirely secular if were not for the explicitly devotional and spiritually instructive context and intent of the diagram. Furthermore, the association of figures with hawks or falcons on their wrists with sinful worldliness was well established in medieval iconography: Robin Oggins observes that of the hundreds of moralizing depictions of falconers in the *Bibles Moralisées*, almost all refer to sin and improper

[21] Folio 50. The inscription is a bit difficult to make out, but appears to read, "Ie woi qver lu esqua," which might be translated, "I see my heart thoroughly examined."

[22] Laura Gelfand suggested the connection between the mirror and the eye of God here, a subject she explores in her essay on Bosch's *Tabletop of the Seven Sins* ("Social Status and Sin: Reading Bosch's Prado *Seven Deadly Sins and Four Last Things* Painting," *The Seven Deadly Sins: From Communities to Individuals*. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007), pp. 231, 235. On confession, self-examination, and the all-seeing eye of God, see Dallas Denery II, *Seeing and Being Seen in the Later Medieval World: Optics, Theology, and Religious Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 39–74.

[23] Translation of this and the following quotation from Sears, *The Ages of Man*, p. 147.

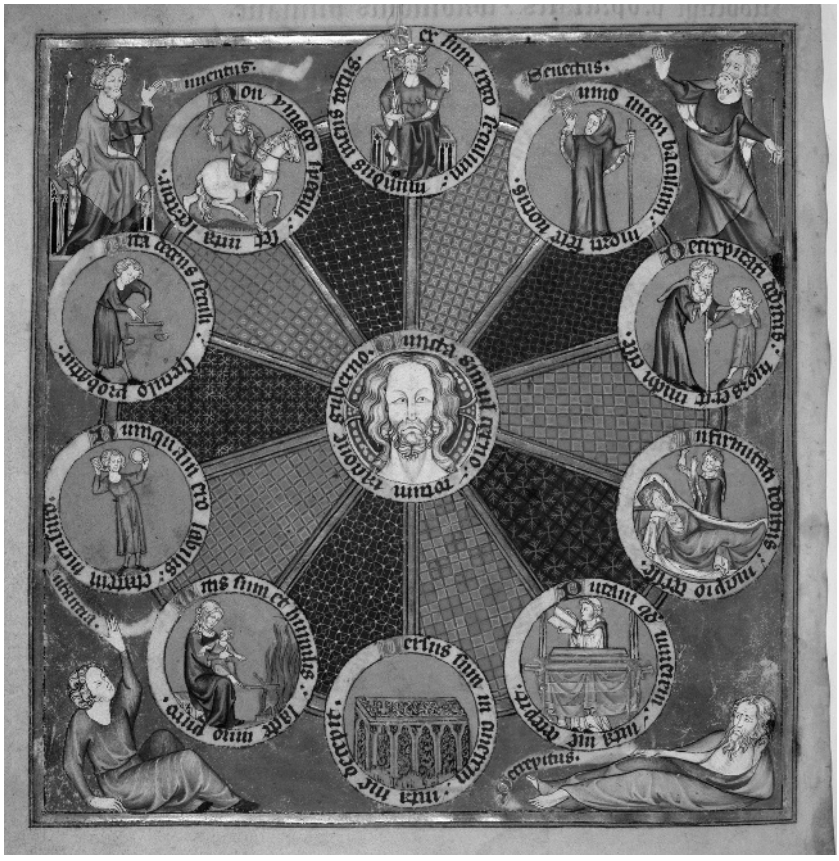

Fig. 15.5 *The ten ages of man*, the Psalter of Robert de Lisle, London, *c*. 1310, and 1330–40. Photo: British Library Board. All Rights Reserved, London, British Library Ms. Arundel 83 II, fol. 126v.

clerical conduct.[24] So our youth has moved away from the self-scrutiny of his earlier years to indulge in worldly and sensual pastimes: not a good omen for his spiritual future! Falconry was one of the common themes for mirror cases in this time period—I will return to this point presently, because the link between mirrors and hunting openly proposed in the text of the De *Lisle Psalter*'s diagram is not coincidental.

The diagram itself belongs to an ensemble of images associated with the *Speculum Theologiae*, a compilation of didactic diagrams and alle-

[24] Robin Oggins, *The Kings and Their Hawks: Falconry in Medieval England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 130.

gorizing images that dates, as an ensemble, to the thirteenth century.[25] What sets the *De Lisle Psalter*'s diagram apart from other surviving examples is its circular organization.[26] The face of God appears at the center, surrounded by alternating panels of red and blue diapering divided by radiating spokes of gold, at the outer terminus of each of which is depicted one of the ten Ages of Man (schemes of the Ages of Man varied widely in number). This whole device is framed within a gilded square, and the space between the outer limits of the circular, central form and the corners of the square is taken up with four human figures who represent (according to their identifying banderoles) infancy, youth, senescence, and decrepitude. Initially the illumination looks something like a rose window, due to the red and blue diapered panels which give an impression of translucency and illumination through subtle variations of saturation. But on further inspection, the window also starts to look something like a mirror; its scale matches that of contemporary hand-mirrors, and the form of a circular object framed by four figures that square the circle also parallel. Furthermore, the inscription that encircles the central roundel with its disembodied vision of the Holy Face makes a strong suggestion that the diagram can be viewed as a sort of devotional mirror that like the mirror in Snow White both looks at and talks back to its viewer, revealing truths otherwise invisible: "Cuncta simul cerno: totum racione guberno," "I perceive all at once, I govern the whole with reason."[27] Gazing upon this diagram, the devotional viewer perceives a reflection of God's view of human life, which is outside time and therefore totalizing and rational in a way that the fleeting image glimpsed by the mortal eye can never be.

To see the face of God at the center of this image of a divine perspective on human life also calls up a commonplace of late medieval

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[25] See Fritz Saxl, "A Spiritual Encyclopaedia of the Later Middle Ages" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 5 (1942), pp. 107–15, 120–21; L.F. Sandler, *The Psalter of Robert De Lisle* (London: Harvey Miller, 1999), pp. 23–27; Sears, *The Ages of Man*, p. 202, n. 23; Lynn Ransom, "The *Speculum theologie* and its Readership: Considering the Manuscript Evidence" *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 93. 4 (1999), pp. 461–63.

[26] Sandler, *The Psalter of Robert De Lisle*, pp. 40–42. Elsewhere, the Ages of Man in the *Speculum Theologiae* are laid out in a branching diagram, as in the manuscript of German (Rhennish) origin now in New Haven (Yale University, Bienecke Library, MS. 416, fol. 6).

[27] Translation is Sears', *The Ages of Man*, p. 147. The mirror as an all-seeing eye of God is discussed by Gelfand in her essay on the Bosch tabletop: see above, note 22. In that work, the Man of Sorrows appears in the center, as opposed to the Holy Face.

devotion: the face of God as itself a mirror. This was an ancient idea, but one that had particular currency in the fourteenth century, when attention to the Holy Face was heightened by the popularity of the cult of the Roman Veronica and its many copies and analogues, and by the controversy that raged (for most of the 1330s) over the *Visio Dei*, or the moment at which souls would experience the Beatific Vision.[28] Seeing the face of God was not just a metaphor for spiritual fulfillment, it was a literal expression of what the Christian soul hoped for and desired. In the hands of mystics, it became a kind of talisman. Meister Eckhart, who made much of the idea of the face of God as a mirror, highlighted its scriptural origins in his *Commentary on John*, pointing out Wisdom 7:25–26, in which the Word is characterized as "a mirror without blemish."[29] The mirror in the title of Marguerite of Porete's (condemned) treatise, *The Mirror of Simple Souls*, at some level probably refers to this scripturally-founded notion, though Barbara Newman has also made a strong case for Marguerite's work as a response to the more cynical and secular *Romance of the Rose*, the alternative title of which was *The Mirror for Lovers*.[30] More orthodox writers also invoked the mirror as a metaphor for spiritually useful looking: Aquinas, for example, wrote of speculation (the study of things through their reflection) as a step towards meditation.[31] Meanwhile, Augustine's argument that knowledge of God can only

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[28] On the Roman Veronica and its permutations, see Gerhardt Wolf and Herbert Kessler, eds., *The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation: Papers from a Colloquium at the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome and the Villa Spelman, Florence, 1996* (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1998); and J. Hamburger, "Vision and the Veronica" in *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone, 1998), pp. 317–82. On the *Visio Dei* controversy, see J.E. Weakland, "Pope John XXII and the Beatific Vision Controversy" *Annuale Mediaevale*, 9 (1968), pp. 76–9; Carolyn Bynum, *The Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200–1336* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), pp. 279–91.

[29] Meister Eckhart, *The Essential Sermons, Commentaries, Treatises, and Defense*, ed. and trans. Bernard McGinn and Edmund Colledge (Paulist Press, 1981), p. 130.

[30] Barbara Newman, "The Mirror and the Rose: Marguerite Porete's Encounter with the *Dieu d'Amours*" in eds. R. Blumnefeld-Kosinski, D. Roberson, and N. Bradley Warren, *The Vernacular Spirit: Essays on Medieval Religious Literature* (New York and Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 105–23.

[31] Viz. "Now to see a thing in a mirror is to see a cause in its effect wherein its likeness is reflected. Hence 'beholding' (*speculatio*) would seem to be reducible to meditation." Thomas Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica of Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 2nd rev. edition, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (1920: online edition Kevin Knight, 2008: http://www.newadvent.org/summa/3180.htm#article3, consulted February 3, 2009): II.2 question 180, article 3, response to objection 2.

be gained from reflection upon the image of God that lies within the self was immensely current and frequently discussed in the fourteenth century.[32] An initial from a manuscript containing the *Somme le roi* and the *Miroir de l'âme*, dated to 1295, illustrates the concept of self-speculation as spiritual exercise nicely; a nun in Cistercian habit kneels before a queen, holding up a mirror: the text begins by observing that because God loves humanity so much, he has given them a mirror, called memory, in which to observe him. (fig. 15.6)

To look upon the image of the face of God in a painting then, was to perform a speculation that was intended to have corrective effects upon the soul.[33] It was not easy work, for in the course of this speculation, the distance between the mortal, sinful state of the viewer and the blessed and transcendent model upon which they reflected would be painfully felt, just as the distance between the prettified world depicted on the back of the mirror case and the temporal experience of the reflection would sting. Robert de Lisle, looking upon the diagram in his devotional book, quite literally faced an image of his own life in which the pleasures of youth and early manhood were fleeting, while senescence, decrepitude, and death were inevitable and drawn out. But that, I would argue, was the whole point. Spiritual work was never meant to be easy or comfortable. From the outset, monastic rules had stressed the importance of labor, both physical and mental, to the discipline of devotion. By the later Middle Ages these ideas permeated lay devotion as well. One of the guiding principles articulated by Geert Groote, founder of the Devotio Moderna movement that flourished among the urban laity in the latter half of the fourteenth century was, "The way to God is a life of struggle."[34]

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[32] For a searching treatment of this line of Augustinianism and its popularity in the fourteenth century, see Jennifer Bryan, *Looking Inward: Devotional Reading and the Private Self in Late Medieval England* (University Park: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), pp. 64–80.

[33] Harry Berger describes one purpose of early-modern portraiture with the Lacanian term "orthopsychic" or "soul-correcting"—a function I would also ascribe to such images as the diagrams of the *Speculum Theologiae* and other images of the Holy Face. H. Berger, "Fictions of the Pose: Facing the Gaze of Early Modern Portraiture," *Representations* 46 (Spring 1994), pp. 87–102.

[34] Otto Gründler, "Devotio Moderna" in *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*, ed. J. Raitt, B. McGinn, J. Meyendorff (London: Taylor and Francis, 1987), p. 180, 183. As Jennifer Bryan noted, too, Augustine framed the interior search for understanding in terms of hard labor: she cited a passage from *Confessions*, "I have become a problem to myself, like land which a farmer works only with difficulty and at the cost of much sweat." Bryan, *Looking Inward*, p. 65.

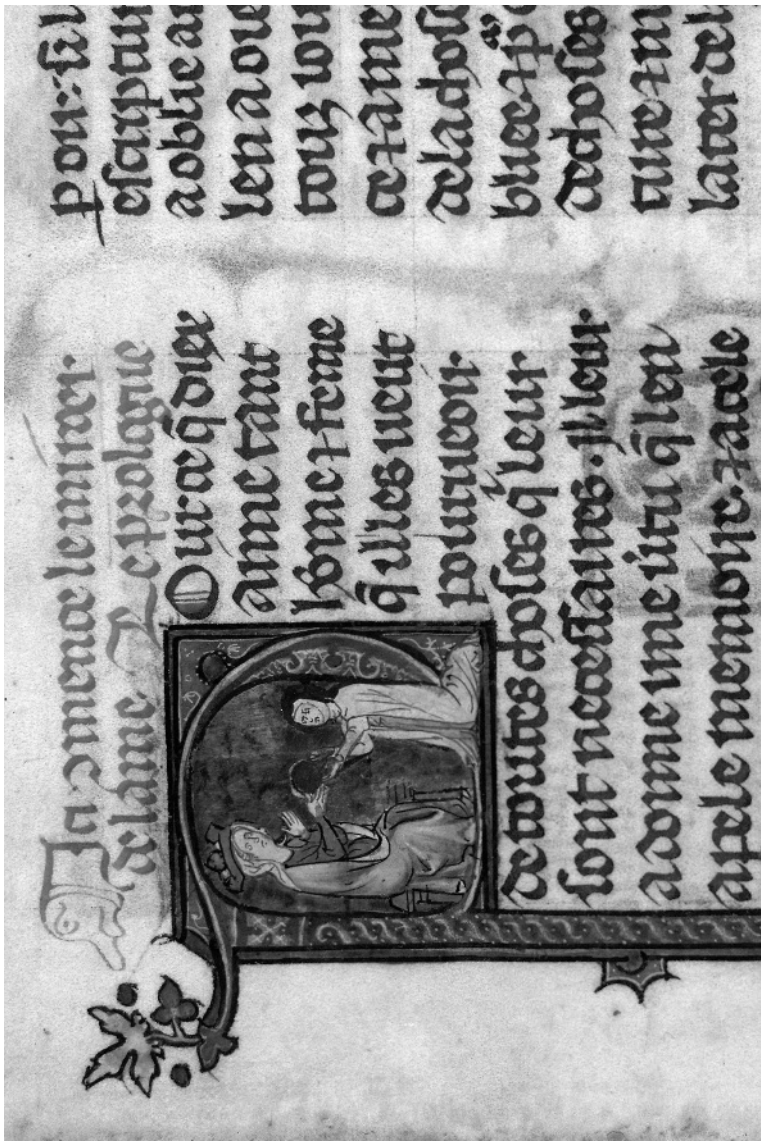

Fig. 15.6 Nun and Queen, initial from the *Miroir de l'âme*, 1295, Paris. Paris Bibliothèque Mazarine, ms. 870, fol. 192. Photo: Bibliothèque Mazarine.

If devotion is, at its heart, about the struggle to see clearly in the flawed mirror of the self the reflection of a perfect Godhead, what does this mean for the interactions people might have with material mirrors? Is there, after all, anything more than an incidental relationship between the "spiritual mirrors" offered by devotional texts and images and the objects that fourteenth century aristocrats used for personal grooming and for display of their wealth and status? Without denying that the principal purpose of such objects was aesthetic, both in the sense of their functional aspect, which aided in the visual presentation of the self, and in their semiotic aspect, in which costly materials and refined imagery coded the owner's high level of cultural and economic status, I would argue that they also worked to ceaselessly return these more worldly aspects of the visual back to the realm of Truth as it was construed in fourteenth-century religious terms. For just as contemporary rhetoric of devotion stressed rigorous self-examination in explicitly visual terms, and posited the journey toward God as a process of struggle against worldly distractions, so the mirror cases frame the viewing of the self within a visual rhetoric of opposing forces which through their conflict advance the attainment of Love. Furthermore, the rhetoric of romantic love itself had, by the fourteenth century, been inextricably linked to the rhetoric of spiritual seeking after God.[35]

In both profane and sacred narratives of love, a principal operative metaphor was that of the quest. Hunting, as I have mentioned, is one of the preferred themes for early-fourteenth-century mirror cases. In addition to the spectacular example from the Met illustrated above, numerous other cases ranging from the subtle and sophisticated to the rough and ready depict scenes of venery in both of its senses. An example from the Art Institute of Chicago (fig. 15.7) features a couple

[35] There is a vast literature on the yoking together of courtly love and spiritual desire (sometimes termed "bridal mysticism"), but perhaps the clearest exposition remains Jean LeClerq, *Monks and Love in Twelfth Century France* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979). Rosemary Woolf's work on Christ as the lover has also been extremely influential on my thinking here, especially, "The Theme of Christ the Lover-Knight in Medieval English Literature" in *Arts and Doctrine: Essays on Medieval Literature*, ed. H. O'Donoghue (London: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 99–117. Finally, Barbara Newman's contributions to the discussion of fourteenth-century mysticism stress the fusion of romance and spirituality in the works of beguines and other mystics whose primary frame of reference was not Latin theology but vernacular literature. See, in particular, B. Newman, "*La mystique courtoise*: Thirteenth-Century Beguines and the Art of Love," *Virile Woman and Womanchrist: Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 137–67.

Fig. 15.7 Mirror back with falconing party, France (Paris?), first half 14th century. Chicago, The Art Institute, 1949. 211. Photo: The Art Institute of Chicago.

who ride close enough that the lover can throw a companionable arm about his lady's shoulders while their servant, walking ahead with the hunting dogs, casts a curious look back at them over his shoulder. Another, roughly-executed case depicts the lover fondling the lady's chin in a boldly assertive gesture while two servants menace the horses with batons and the lady herself wields a substantial flail. (fig. 15.8) The scene's intimations of violence are very much in keeping with the nature of hunting as a blood sport, but also infuse its amatory subject with a frisson of sadism and perhaps an oblique reference to the disciplining of the senses. Michael Camille and Alcuin Blamires both noted of another mirror case that depicts a servant beating the lovers' horses that the flagellation may refer to "taming the animal instincts,"

Fig. 15.8 Mounted couple with servants, Paris, first third 14th century. Louvre, Ancienne collection Révoil; acquisition 1828, MRR 196. Photo: Art Resource for RMN.

and subduing Eros in favor of a purified and chaste form of love.[36] The linking of corporeal discipline with the control of sin was pervasive in medieval thought and life: from the rigors of desert monasticism and the self-mutilation and starvation practiced by seekers of mystical experience in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, to more internalized, metaphoric uses of bodily punishment, pain was routinely viewed as a spiritually roborative experience. Indeed, as Robert Mills observes of later medieval pedagogy, "Acts of beating were not simply

[36] See note 2, above.

a means of imposing discipline in the classroom, but also as a symbolic resource for imaginatively imparting knowledge."[37]

The necessity for such discipline arises from the very public nature of these amatory scenes, and of the whole construct of courtly love as a visible performance. Another rather roughly-rendered mirror case surrounds the courting couple with noisy visual fanfare that evokes the chaos and excitement of the beginning of a hunt. (fig. 15.9) While the lovers interact with by-now routine gestures of courtship, a servant blows a horn almost in their ears, huntsmen lead the party, and in the background, spectators look on from the crenellated parapet of a castle. The visual clamor recalls the passage that occurs early in Chrétien de Troyes' *Erec*, where Arthur's court sets out on the hunt amidst a great deal of noise and trouble (just as Gawain, attempting to discourage the king, has predicted): the riders at full gallop, the horns braying, men shouting, the hounds plunging ahead. Disengaged from all of this, though not yet actively courting, Erec rides calmly beside Queen Guinevere, unmoved by the pulsing excitement of the other knights.[38] However, the aggressive energy of this small, ivory relief also calls to mind the less salubrious characterization of erotic love proposed by earlier medieval representations. The horn-blowing figure, in particular, echoes the nave capital depicting profane music and lust at the church of the Madeleine at Vézelay, where one of the musicians blasts a *shawm* or horn of some type into the ear of a listening demon, who paws at a naked woman while snakes bite him on the ear and the genitals.[39] Horns and other wind instruments were, in general, associated with profane music and the sins that it inevitably provoked: Konrad of Megenberg, a fourteenth-century moralist, complained, "Indeed, in modern times the *shawm*s and loud trumpets generally banish the sober fiddles from the feasts and the young girls dance eagerly to the loud noise…shaking their buttocks womanishly

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[37] Robert Mills, *Suspended Animation: Pain, Pleasure and Punishment in Medieval Culture* (New York: Reaktion Books, 2005), p. 158.

[38] *Lors chevauchent a grant esploit/En la forest vienent tot droit/Cil qui devant ierent alé/Avoient ja le cerf levé./Li un cornent, li autre hüent/Li chien après le cerf s'esbrüent,/ Corrent, engressen et abaient./Li archer espressement traient./Devant aux toz chaçoit li rois/Sor un chaceor espanois.* Chrétien de Troyes, *Erec et Enide*, ed. Jean-Marie Fritz (Paris: Livre de Poche, 1992), v. 115–24.

[39] On this capital, see Thomas Dale, "Monsters, Corporeal Deformities, and Phantasms in the Cloister of St-Michel-de-Cuxa" *The Art Bulletin* 83 (2001), p. 412. Kirk Ambrose, *The Nave Sculpture of Vézelay: The Art of Monastic Viewing* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2006), p. 89.

and rudely."[40] Horn and *shawm*-playing grotesques crowd the margins of fourteenth-century manuscripts, and there, as on this mirror case, the sounds they invoke are those of bawdy ruckus.

Dozens of other mirror cases propose variations on the basic theme of hunting as both setting and figure for amatory campaigns, but what they all share is an interest in the tension between the intimate gestures and attitude of courtship and the sanguinary, noisy, violent activity of hunting. In one particularly refined example, the lovers' interaction seems especially charged with visual suggestions of attack and evasion. (fig. 15.10) The lover, mounted on a high-stepping stallion, has managed to grapple his arm round the lady far enough to fondle her breast, while she pulls away, the arc of her body creating a triangular space between them into which her crooked elbow is inserted, as if to fend off the embrace. The visual tension of the scene is further underscored by a variety of horizontal axes that pull the composition away from its center, located in the suggestively phallic intersection of the bend of the man's body between thigh and abdomen and the high pommel of his saddle. Along the ground line, two hunting dogs course to the right, echoing the movement of the horses, while the man's extended arm gestures strongly in a leftward direction. This centrifugal force complements a series of visual gestures around the main figures' heads that further the sense of conflict: an ovoid mass of foliage pushes in from the left edge of the composition behind the lover's forward-thrust head, emphasizing his aggression, while the lady's head recoils slightly, her chin lifting away from this assertive demand for a kiss.

The obvious parallels between the hunt and courtship have been openly acknowledged and explored since antiquity (Ovid was particularly fond of collapsing the business of hunting for sustenance and sport with that of hunting for sex), and the metaphorical implications of the hunt as an amatory pursuit are readily evident in writers as diverse as Marie de France (act. *c.* 1160–1200), Wolfram von

[40] Konrad of Megenberg, *Yconomica*, capitulum 48, lines 94–7, cited in full and translated in Christopher Page, "German Musicians and their Instruments: A 14th century Account by Konrad of Megenberg," *Early Music* 10 (1982), pp. 194–95. As Keith MacGowan pointed out, the distinctions made between "haut" (roughly translated as "loud") instruments and "bas" (or "soft") ones were not simply those of volume, but of appropriateness to particular settings, of the performer's social status, and of the virtuousness or lack thereof of the performer's body. "The Prince and the Piper: Haut, Bas and the Whole Body in Early Modern Europe," *Early Music* 27 (1999), pp. 211–12, 239–41.

Fig. 15.9 Mounted Couple, ivory, 2/4 14th century Paris. Louvre Don F. Doistau, 1919 OA 7278. Photo: Art Resource for RMN.

Eschenbach (act. *c.* 1190–1220), Andreas Capellanus (act. 1180s), and Gaston Phebus (1331–1391). In her classic work on the semiotics of the hunt in later medieval literature, Marcelle Thiébaux observed that the motif of hunting plays a central role in romance not only because it represents the sport most associated with the knightly class, but also because in the literal as well as the metaphoric sense, it facilitates the amatory adventures of the hero, who may be figured either as the hunter pursing his prey, or as the prey itself, mercilessly slain by love's arrows.[41] Richard de Fournival's narrator in the *Bestiary of Love* even connects hunting, mirrors, and courtly love explicitly when

[41] M. Thiébaux, *The Stag of Love: The Chase in Medieval Literature* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1974), p. 58.

Fig. 15.10 Mounted Couple, ivory, Paris, first half 14th century. Louvre Don F. Doistau, 1919 OA 7280. Photo: Art Resource for RMN.

he describes his seduction: "I was more captured by my sight than the tiger in the mirror," referring to the belief that a tigress, enraged by the loss of her cubs, can be distracted by the sight of her own reflection in a mirror.[42]

But hunting can also signify the spiritual quest; the tales of Saint Eustace and Saint Giles, in which hunting leads to conversion and spiritual enlightenment, were familiar and popular. The Arthurian tradition carried these motifs into the vernacular literatures; while some Arthurian hunting episodes are clearly amatory, others, such as the adventures of Perceval and Gawain, are heavily larded with Christian

[42] Richard de Fournival, *Master Richard's Bestiary of Love and Response*, trans. Jeanette Beer (Purdue University Press, 1999), p. 4.

spiritual seeking.[43] Meanwhile, hunting enthusiasts frequently praised their sport for its spiritual benefits as well as its physical rigors. In the *Livre du roy modus et royne ratio* of Henri de Ferriéres (*c.* 1370), the virtue of the hunter assures him a place in heaven; the hunt's demand that he rise early protects him from the vice of sloth, and from lazing about in bed, where lust beckons. Indeed, the introduction to the first part of *Modus*, the *Livre de Deduis* (Book of Hunting), proclaims that King Modus "made (this book) against the state of sloth," a statement supported in Modus' own voice a little further along, where he announces that he has written this treatise on good hunting as an antidote to the pervasive vice of sloth among the powerful.[44] On the other hand, as I have already mentioned, falconry in particular carried a negative spiritual meaning: sloth (*accidia*), lechery (*luxuria*), and pride (*superbia*) could all be signified by the figure of a man with a falcon on his wrist, perhaps because these vices were particularly associated with the class of people (nobles) who could afford to and had the legal right to practice this form of venery.[45] Hunting metaphors abound in the rhetoric of preaching and conversion, as well, and naturally, when the soul's desire for God could be understood in terms of the romantic *amor de lonh*, the romance trope of the lover as hunter coursing after the beloved was mobilized for spiritual, as well as profane purposes.[46] Mechthild of Magdeburg, for example, makes use of the hunt in a

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[43] For an assessment of this tradition, see Thiébaux, *The Stag of Love*, pp. 71–88 and Piotr Sadowski, *The Knight on His Quest: Symbolic Patterns of Transition in* Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (University of Delaware Press, 1996), pp. 164–65; Anne Rooney, *Hunting in Middle English Literature* (Boydell and Brewer, 1993), pp. 49–50, 128–29.

[44] *Les Livres du Roy Modus et de la Royne Ratio*, ed. Gunnar Tillander, 2 volumes (Paris: Sociètè des Anciens Textes Français, 1932), volume 1, 8 (lines 150–153), p. 9.

[45] Oggins, *The Kings and their Hawks*, pp. 131–38. On the class associations of the sins, see Gelfand, "Social Status and Sin"; Jonathan Alexander, "Labeur and Paresse: Ideological Representations of Medieval Peasant Labor," *Art Bulletin* 72 (1990), pp. 444–47. Probably the most useful primary text for understanding what sins were particularly associated with particular classes of people in the later Middle Ages is the *Summa Aurea* of Henry of Susa, better known as Hostiensis (1253). A modern reprint of a sixteenth-century edition of this influential work is available: Henricus de Segusio, *Summa Aurea* (Turin: Bottega d'Erasmo, 1963). Books and chapters are subdivided into the kinds of questions confessors should ask, according to canon law, of the different classes of people (the classification is quite granular, and distinguishes between, for instance, different types of regular clergy, or different types of married women).

[46] Thiébaux, *The Stag of Love*, pp. 59–66, 171–72; John Cummins *The Hound and the Hawk: The Medieval Art of Hunting* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1988), pp. 68–83.

dialogue in which *Minne*, Love, wounds, catches, binds and ravishes the Soul; it is an episode that pulses with cruel eroticism, a kind of spiritual rape fantasy.[47]

Hunting then, seems a particularly appropriate subject for mirror cases that serve as both objects of display, announcing status, and objects of self-speculation, where the latter activity is always charged with spiritual implications. The physical rigors of hunting, the pain and labor of courtship, and the ceaseless struggle of the soul to perceive God are all, in their way, parts of a whole view of human life as travail made bearable only by the promise that perhaps, in the end, the much desired object will be caught, savored by the senses, and incorporated. But even when the subject was not the hunt, the principle of *agon* guided the iconographic choices made by artists who carved ivory mirror cases. Whether depicting the Siege of the Castle of Love, an elopement, a tournament, or a chess game, they figured courtship in terms of conflict, struggle, and adversarial action. Furthermore, even when representing courtship more simply as a series of interactions between two youthful lovers, these sculptors focused on themes of opposition and moments of tension rather than on the fulfillment of love's promise. Not for the Middle Ages the frankly erotic imagery found on classical mirror cases, and not for early fourteenth century artisans and audiences the openly religious and visionary imagery that would become popular on mirror backs after the middle of the century.

Instead, as in the twin valves of a particularly deluxe mirror case demonstrate, the games of love are all about feints and parries. (fig. 15.11) In eight scenes of courtship, each depicting a pair of lovers, not one kiss is consummated, though plenty of kisses and caresses seem to be on offer. The couple in the upper left quadrant of the left valve come closest, physically, to a full embrace, but even though their bodies are joined from shoulder to leg and their heads incline toward one another, the nearly symmetrical gestures of their disengaged arms pull them apart. They seem to be caught in a passage of a dance that will soon separate them. The other seven couples are even farther from unity: to the right of the dancing couple, the lover lunges forward to touch the lady's chin, but the lady recoils, her garments

[47] Mechtild of Magdeburg, *The Flowing Light of the Godhead*, trans. Frank Tobin (New York and Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1998), Book I.3, pp. 42–43.

Fig. 15.11 Pair of valves to a mirror case with scenes of courtship, first third 14th century, Paris. Louvre, MRR 197. Photo: Art Resource for RMN.

describing a strong arc away from his body. Below, in the lower left, the lover strikes a more subservient posture, kneeling and offering his joined hands in a gesture of submission and fealty while his lady sways towards him, proffering the chaplet that will crown him as her chosen suitor. Michael Camille observed the grossly sexual implications of such depicted exchanges, the phallic heart or hands for the penetrable crown, but it is important to stress that here, the couple lingers on the verge of fulfillment.[48] She has not enclosed his hands within her own, accepting his fealty, nor given the chaplet, just yet. To the left of this couple, another pair, seated on a bench, playfully caresses one another's hair, but against the intimacy of these gestures, their bodies turn outwards, away from the crescent of space that separates them. The lady, her shins angled to the left, holds a little dog upon her far knee, while her lover supports his falcon on his gloved wrist. These

[48] See note 2, above.

pets come loaded with semiotic freight. The lapdog, or *chienet* was a stock figure in medieval romance, where as love-gift, go-between, and intimate of a lady's thighs he often played an ambiguous role, representing fidelity but also libidinous desire, with intimations of bestiality.[49] As already noted, the hawk may mark the man out as an aristocrat, but it also implicates him in the usual aristocratic vices of lust, pride, and laziness. The hunting bird, meanwhile, can stand for the lover himself, as a hunter, or, more allegorically, for the moral qualities of the beloved, or for the nature of love itself.[50]

The other valve of this same case continues the exploration of courtship as unfulfilled desire, constantly moving towards fruition but also away from it. Gestures that draw the lovers close are counterbalanced by gestures of repulsion, as in the couple in the upper right quadrant: he kneels, and takes her around the waist, pulling at her gown while she holds the chaplet over his head, but fends him off with her other arm as her feet dance away from him to the left. Below them, on the diagonal, another kneeling lover takes a more beguiling approach, proffering a bloom he has just plucked from the rose bush that springs up in the space between him and his beloved. She sways away from him, coyly, even as she holds out the chaplet beneath the lifted bloom, letting her wrist brush against his. If, as in the *Roman de la Rose*, the plucked flower stands for the lady's bodily love, it appears the lover has already claimed his prize, but still, they are not joined, for the rose bush, with its thorns, divides them. Throughout the eight scenes of courting, not one single pair is allowed to fully realize their desire, a situation that, in its incessant repletion, raises the erotic tension to a very high pitch. Narrative closure is simply not presented here, for it would destroy the delicious anticipation of pleasure to depict pleasure itself.[51]

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[49] Ben Ramm, "Barking up the Wrong Tree? The Significance of the *Chienet* in French Romance" *Parergon* 22 (2005), pp. 47–69. On the association of dogs with promiscuity and treachery, see Beryl Rowland, *Animals with Human Faces: A Guide to Animal Symbolism*. (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1973), p. 58; and James Marrow, "Christ's Tormentors in Northern European Art of the Late Middle Ages and the Early Renaissance" *Art Bulletin* 59 (1977), p. 167.

[50] Thiébaux, *The Stag of Love*, p. 113; Douglas Kelly, *The Medieval Imagination: Rhetoric and the Poetry of Courtly Love* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1978), pp. 151–52.

[51] The stock of romance imagery that circulated in manuscripts as well as in ivories and other media was fairly diverse—illustrated manuscripts of the *Roman de la Rose* and the Arthurian romances contain thousands of different subjects. However,

The deferral of the lovers' desire in these images cuts to the core of the purpose of the objects; to stimulate, through the visual sense, the imagination, and through the imagination, the body's sensual awareness and anticipation. In other words, they are meant to be turn-ons. However, the question remains as to what they are meant to turn their viewers on to. Sexual desire, certainly, but we must keep in mind that erotic longing was the common coin of both *fin amors* and religious contemplation. Mechtild's hunted, tormented, and ravaged Soul is simply one of the more explicit statements of this. These little relief sculptures are only one side of the objects to which they belong, and exist in dynamic tension with the mirror on the other side. Turning them over, their original owners saw reflected their own faces, and the yearning and palpitating erotic excitement of the mirror back must have spilled over into these perceptions. But to gaze at one's own image with desire aroused would seem strange and sinful unless that image were understood as a portal or a beginning place for the scrutiny of the self that leads toward the ultimate vision of God, a turn on to make all others retire from the field. The perceived difference between the carved and reflective faces of the mirror parallels and deepens the awareness of the difference between the reflected image and the ideal likeness toward which the soul strives. Unfulfilled erotic desire and spiritual longing are collapsed even as the mirror's user is confronted with her own mortality.

The turmoil of courtship depicted on the pictorial side of these mirror cases corresponds, of course, to the main matter of contemporary courtly literature. But it also corresponds to the way in which the makers and users of these objects framed their relationship to the sacred; the soul struggled and worked and aspired toward God, and on this side of the divide between life and death, at least, never knew exactly how close it had come. The reflective side of the mirror, too, presented this struggle, though in different terms; the face that one saw reflected there was transitory yet also in its way an image of the Divine

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certain visual tropes were nearly universal to all these works, and those found on the ivory mirror backs could be said to condense these tropes down to their essence. The illustrated romance's borrowing of motifs and compositions across texts (including religious texts) and media has been the subject of a number of interesting studies, including, most recently, Martine Meuwese, "Roses, Ruse, and Romance: Iconographic Relationship Between the *Roman de la Rose* and Arthurian Literature," *De la Rose: text, image, fortune*, ed. Catherine Bel, Herman Braet (Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2006), pp. 93–116.

Creator, flawed and distorted by the imperfections of the worldly substance from which the mirror was made and, on a spiritual level, by sin. Although writing two centuries later, Shakespeare, in Sonnet 62, captures this medieval sensibility about the spiritually tonic effect of the mirror's truth telling function when he has his narrator admit, after an almost-parodic octet of self-adulation:

> But when my glass shows me myself indeed
> Beated and chopped with tanned antiquity,
> Mine own self-love quite contrary I read;
> Self, so self-loving were iniquity.[52]

In place of Shakespeare's narrator's conclusion that what this disturbing revelation of his own physical state ought to teach him is to love the imperfections wrought by time as signs of "the beauty of [the self's] days," a medieval viewer would perhaps have seen the imperfections as signs of humanity's fallen estate, tokens of the distance between the desiring eye and the perfected vision of the face of God. The difficulty, even impossibility, of squaring the self glimpsed in the mirror with the truth of the soul's reflection of God made the reflected image all the more poignant, the deferred pleasure of the meeting with God the more piercing. The worldly vanity of the mirror and of the performance of self it facilitated are, in these objects, balanced by the way they construct the viewing experience in terms of struggle, conflict, and unfulfilled desire.

[52] William Shakespeare, *The Sonnets*, ed. Stephen Orgel (New York: Penguin Classics, 2001), p. 65.

16. BONES AND STONES: IMAGING SACRED DEFENSE IN MEDIEVAL COLOGNE*

Scott B. Montgomery

Strolling along a stretch of medieval city wall, a person living in the twenty-first century may feel overwhelmed by the stature of such fortuitously surviving relics of pre-modern urbanization. But even this amazement hardly does justice to the physical and symbolic magnificence of the image that is the medieval city wall and the ways in which it interacts with those who view it. (fig. 16.1) Unlike today, when such walls seem little more than vestiges of the old city which is now but the center of a larger, amorphous urban sprawl, in intent and function medieval walls provided potently palpable parameters of the city itself. They outlined a clear and present epidermal definition to the urban organism—its skin, as it were. This external casing was permeable only at the openings—magnificent and heavily fortified city gates. Carefully guarded to protect them as though they were consecrated maidens of urban commerce and prosperity, the gates regulated passage within and without the city. Between the gates, the massive stone circuit of walls insured that all would be safe—functioning as urban cincture and means of ensuring civic security. In much of the

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* This study is derived and partially excerpted from my larger investigation of the relics and visual culture of the Eleven Thousand Virgins of Cologne—*Saint Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins of Cologne. Relics, Reliquaries and the Visual Culture of Group Sanctity in Late Medieval Europe* (Munich: Peter Lang Press, 2009). It in turn finds its embryonic origins in a chapter of my doctoral dissertation, *The Use and Perception of Reliquary Busts in the Late Middle Ages* (Ph.D. dissertation, Rutgers University, 1996), esp. pp. 307–62. In the interest of disencumbering this article with copious footnotes, a few instances notwithstanding, I shall refer the reader to my book for reference to some of the broader bibliography on this cult. For their extraordinary collegiality, wisdom and insight, and their generous invitation to include my essay amongst the work of the excellent scholars included in this august volume, I extend my sincere thanks to Sarah Blick and Laura Gelfand. For collegial discussion and sage advice on things "Ursuline" over the years, I thank Joan Holladay, Sally Cornelison, Jacqueline Jung, Victor Coonin, Philip Earenfight, Elizabeth McLachlan, Sarah McHam, Alice A. Bauer and others too many to name. For their superhuman patience and understanding, I dedicate this to my Three Graces—Alice A. Bauer, Francesca I. Montgomery, and Gabriella S. Montgomery.

Fig. 16.1 Detail of south wall of Cologne, near the Ulrepforte, showing the relief commemorating the Defense of Cologne on October 14–15, 1268, *c.* 1378. Photo: author.

terminology of medieval urban description, the city is personified as feminine (eg. La Serenissima, Sancta Colonia), though not as a hapless maiden. Rather, the city is personified as potent and virile, yet feminine, not unlike the virtues described by Prudentius.[1] This associative conundrum (perhaps to the medieval mind, hopefully not to a modern mentality) might best be illustrated by the hagiomorphized reckoning of Cologne's medieval city walls as akin to the mighty band of warrior virgins—St. Ursula and her army of eleven thousand maidens—who regularly protect their funereal city. Like these holy virgins, the city may be fair, but it is not to be trifled with, as asserted by the great circlet of masonry that defines it. The imposing walls of medieval Cologne provide such an optic, haptic and measurable statement of power and identity.[2] Because the wall physically defines/confines the city, as well as symbolically portrays its power, it functions both structurally and cognitively like a figural reliquary which also fleshes-out the identity and potency of the relics carefully ensconced within. Just as the wall fashions an "urban skin," the reliquary fashions an epidermal layer to the relics as it fosters a fusion of container and contained into one complete entity. This is most visually apparent with the figural reliquary which both physically and perceptually reconstitutes the saint's body. The metal of wood of the reliquary conceptually fuses with the holy bones, literally taking on the persona of the saint.[3] The reliquary

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[1] Aurelius Clemens Prudentius' 5th century *Psychomachia* portrays the conflict between virtues and vices in an anthropomorphized epic of allegorical warfare. See: Prudentius, *Prudentius Volume I*, H.J. Thomson, trans. (Bury St. Edmunds: Loeb Classic Library, 1949), pp. 274–343; Johannes Bergman, ed., *Aurelii Prudentii Clementis carmina* (Corp. script. Eccl. Lat LXI) (Vienna-Leipzig, 1926), pp. 165ff; See also Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press and Medieval Academy of America, 1989 [1939]); Macklin Smith, *Prudentius' Psychomachia: A Reexamination* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976). Regarding Medieval German glosses on Prudentius' text, see Sinead O'Sullivan, *Early Medieval Glosses on Prudentius' Psychomachy: The Weitz Tradition* (Mittellateinische Studien Und Texte) (Leiden: E. J. Brill Press, 2004).

[2] This can be seen in the ritual measuring of city walls as part of securing holy protection from enemies both military and viral. For example, in a 1482 endeavor to ward off disease, city leaders in Barcelona measured their city walls and burned candles made from the long wick in five foot segments. Similarly, at Nieuport in Flanders in 1489, in order to withstand a siege, the length of the fortified defenses was measured, the number being replicated in a series of candles which were lighted in honor of the Virgin. See: Sheila Sweetinburgh, "Wax, Stone and Iron: Dover's Town Defenses in the late Middle Ages," *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 124 (2004), pp. 183–208.

[3] On this phenomenon, see: Montgomery, 1996; Scott B. Montgomery, "Golden Flesh, Radiant Bones: The Unity of Relic and Reliquary in Medieval Perception" in:

thus becomes the defining parameter of the saint's physical extension, just as the mural cincture delineates the extent of the city.

In the case of civic patron saints, such a parallel is all the more fitting. Saints personify their cities through a variety of imagery such as civic coats of arms. They reside in their cities via their presence in their relics. They protect their cities through miracles enacted via these relics. Walls achieve an analogous function through imposing masonry that protects and circumscribes the civic enclosure.[4] Both city walls and patron saints interact with their audiences—resident and visitor alike—in establishing rich, complex parameters of urban identification. As protective and present inhabitants of the city, the saints provide numerous scenarios for interchange with mortals—as fellow denizens who enjoy the same fabric of the city, from its churches to its streets. Walls too fashion a variety of interactive situations, from the permeable but intimidating portal of the city gate to the imposing deterrent so forcefully asserted by the enclosing cincture. The confluence of these two elements—saintly and mural—provides one of the most palpable arenas for material, perceptual and imaginative interactivity within the city. On both physical and symbolic levels, walls and saints were very much involved in the dynamic discourse of interaction and identity that directed much activity within the medieval city. Bones and stones define and defend the urban entity.

To be sure, I am not arguing that all city walls were consistently viewed in cognitive concert with reliquaries of urban patron saints. However, I do wish to posit that such a dynamic interaction did, in fact, exist in some cases, and was explicitly augmented by imagery that sought to reinforce the connection between civic fortification and holy patronage. Most obviously, one could note the near-ubiquitous representations of saints, in sculpture and painting on gateways in city walls. Of the legion examples dispersed throughout medieval Europe, I would like to cite one geographically far away from, but chrono-

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The Interrelationship of Relics and Images in Christian and Buddhist Culture (Bulletin of Death and Life Studies, Vol. 5) (Tokyo: University of Tokyo, 2009), pp. 59–74.

[4] One might consider the relevance here of practices of magical binding (ligature charms, etc.). See: Lionel Rothkrug, "Popular Religion and Holy Shrines: Their Influence on the Origins of the German Reformation and their Role in German Cultural Development" in: James Obelkevich, ed., *Religion and the People, 800–1700* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), pp. 30–31; Don C. Skemer, *Binding Words: Textual Amulets in the Middle Ages (Magic in History)* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006).

logically close to, my intended emphasis on Cologne. The imposing, fourteenth-century Porta San Niccolò of Florence, clearly visible above the skyline with its massive, crenellated tower that protects this gateway on the eastern edge of Oltrarno, will serve as a fine illustration of this phenomenon. (fig. 16.2) As if the adjacent walls (now destroyed) and the tower did not send an imposing enough message, the gateway itself is surmounted by an image of the enthroned Virgin and Child flanked by Saints John the Baptist and Nicholas. (fig. 16.3) While the selection of saints could be explained as simply indicating the gate's location in the parish of St. Nicholas in the city of the Baptist, this seems to be only part of the image's intention. Such imagery, facing inward as though visualizing the saints' beneficent guardianship of the city, serves both a talismanic function to encourage such holy patronage and as a devotional encouragement for Florentines to comport themselves in a manner deserving this holy succor. This image, inextricably linked to its location above the massive city gate, engages the viewer—Florentine and non-Florentine alike—in a dynamic discourse on the grandeur of Florence, the piety of its citizens, and the proximate potency of its holy benefactors. The imposing significance of this dialogue is made all-the-more palpable by the immense defensive structure into which the fresco is bound.[5] The saints convey their steadfast presence not only through their iconographic representation, but also through the allusion to their role as literal gatekeepers to the city—the status of which is boldly asserted by their prominent placement at such urban portals. As one passes through the city gates, s/he is both spatially and temporally engaged in a visual (and cognitive) conversation with these holy images, and by extension with the saintly personages themselves. Interfacing with the saints on the city gates was tantamount to communicating with the city itself, for cities and

[5] A similar image can be found on the exterior of the Porta San Giorgio (1260), also on the Oltrarno side of Florence, where a relief of St. George slaying the dragon seems to offer visual assurance of the saint's protection of the city from evil (attackers), while the inside is frescoed with a protective Madonna and Child flanked by St. George and St. Leonard, by Bicci di Lorenzo, as though bestowing blessings upon the city. See: Bruce Cole, *Italian Art 1250–1550. The Relation of Renaissance Art to Life and Society* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), pp. 149–50.

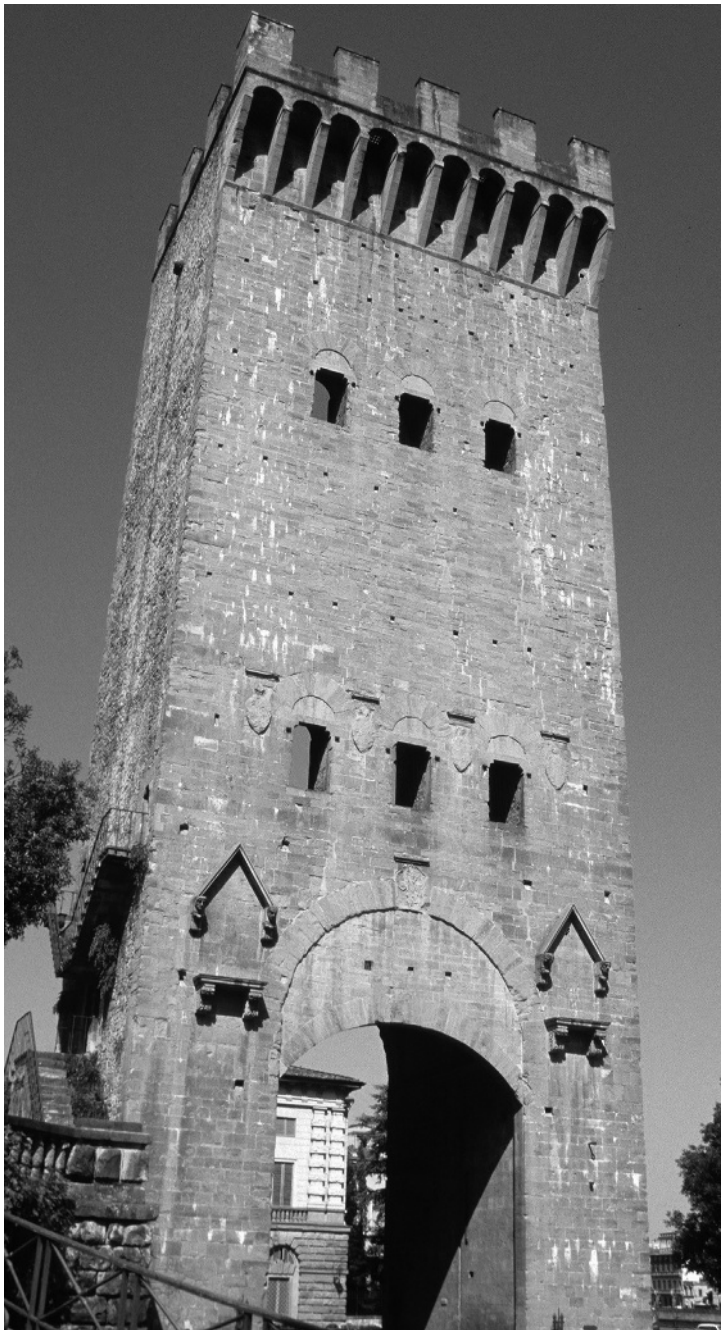

Fig. 16.2 Porta San Niccolò, Florence. 14th Century. Photo: author.

Fig. 16.3 *Virgin and Child flanked by Saints John the Baptist and Nicholas*, fresco on inner lunette of the Porta San Niccolò, Florence. 14th Century. Photo: author.

their saints were inextricably bound.[6] Florence was, after all, the city of the Baptist, much like Siena was the city of the Virgin.[7]

We might also note the prominent mural presence at the very center of Ambrogio Lorenzetti's fresco of *The Good City and Country* in the Sala dei Nove within the Palazzo Pubblico of Siena.[8] The great, crenellated gateway towers above the massive pink walls that define both the liminality of the gates and the intransitive nature of the walls that literally circumscribe the divide between town and country. The communal governing body of Siena is encouraged to interact with this image by the tacit association between their own governance and the felicitous portrayal of idealized life in a prosperous city. The fresco acts as both role model and mirror, fostering a rich dynamic dialogue of interactive referents, as good governance shapes the life of the city while the image of the prosperous city reflects the ongoing importance for benevolent rule. Similarly, the fresco reveals the interdependence (and thus interaction) of city and countryside (*contado*). While the imposingly-portrayed city wall demarcates the clear distinction between the two, the prominent city gate equally asserts the controlled permeability of this interchange, providing a liminal space that serves as liaison between town and country. Comprehending the dynamic nature of this intercourse (both human and topographic) was a quotidian aspect of medieval life. These examples reveal some aspects of the complex fugue of images, media and audiences in the fashioning of urban identity.

But while gates were doubtless the most visited and visible facets of the perimeter of the medieval city, they were not the only portions of the urban epidermis that warranted attention or awe. The city walls frequently garnered more praise than many of the more art-historically famous monuments contained therein.[9] It should give us pause to

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[6] For an excellent study of the relationship between saints and their cities in Late Medieval Italy, see Diana Webb, *Patrons and Defenders. The Saints in the Italian City-states* (London: I.B. Taurus, 1996).

[7] See Diana Norman, *Siena and the Virgin. Art and Politics in a Late Medieval City State* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999).

[8] For a fine examination of the frescoes in this room, see Diana Norman, "'Love justice, you who judge the earth': the paintings of the Sala dei Nove in the Palazzo Pubblico, Siena" in *Siena, Florence and Padua. Art, Society and Religion 1280–1400, Vol. II: Case Studies*, (ed.) Diana Norman. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 145–67.

[9] An oft-noted example would be the fifth-century Theodosian walls of Constantinople, praised in the sixteenth century by Pierre Gilles. See: Pierre Gilles, *The Antiquities of*

consider that the walls of a city were not only functional as protective perimeters, but also struck contemporaries as imposing images of civic magnificence. On occasion, images might be set within and upon the stretches of city wall to underscore the wall's role as cincture of urban security, possibly even asserting its impermeability, through the commemoration of a topically-relevant miracle performed by civic patron saints. In such a case, the image on the wall literally folds into the image of the wall as each pushes and pulls expanded meanings out of the other—all in the service of glorifying the city and its holy patrons. In reminding viewers of miraculous mural protection, such images iterate and reiterate the connection between civic security and the potent presence of patron saints. We ought not lose sight of the fact that one would encounter such imagery regularly, fostering an oft-repeated physical and cognitive interaction between saints, walls, and viewers. An illustrative case is a plaque added to the exterior of the south stretch of the walls of medieval Cologne—an image which works along all the above-mentioned lines, as it comments upon the wall's strength while its iconographic and narrative messages are themselves defined by these same walls. Text and context commingle to the point of melding. Masonry and miracle fuse in a relief that portrays the successful defense of Cologne's impregnable walls by its heavenly army of impregnable virgins.

During the night of October 14–15, 1268, an army of mounted soldiers, five thousand strong, penetrated the walls of Cologne roughly two hundred meters northwest of the Ulrepforte on the southern perimeter of the city. This seemed to portend disaster for the city and victory for the besieging forces of Archbishop Engelbert II von Falkenstein (r. 1261–74). However, the attacker's upper hand was short-lived, as they soon discovered that the city was protected by more than masonry.[10] In traditional historical reckoning, the attacking army was repulsed by the citizens of Cologne, led by the patrician Matthias Overstolz. In civic mythos, the city was saved by a far more

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Constantinople, John Ball, trans., Ronald G. Musto, ed. (New York: Italica Press, 1988), pp. 4–5, 44–49.

[10] The thirteenth century witnessed growing tensions between the commune of Cologne (founded 1074) and the Archbishops. While the siege of 1268 reveals the explosive conflict that resulted from these tensions, it was most pronounced in the June 5, 1288 Battle of Worringen, after which Cologne essentially became a free city and the Archbishops relocated their residence to Bonn. See Sergio Boffa, *Warfare in Medieval Brabant: 1356–1406* (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell Press, 2004), p. 289.

supernatural and potent force, as the patron saints of the city joined the citizens of Cologne in their defense of the bastions.[11] Saint Ursula and her Eleven Thousand Virgin companions, along with St. Gereon and his Theban Legion appeared and literally took to the walls to defend their city and their people.[12] Being no match for such a supernatural army, the archbishop's forces were forced to withdraw, despite their initial success in entering the city. This was to be the only time that the walls of medieval Cologne were breached. Furthermore, since the soldiers did not advance beyond the initial hole in the wall, it could be argued that though the walls were temporarily broken, they were not actually penetrated, but remained as intact as the virginity of the holy companions of Ursula who prevented the attacking soldiers from taking the city.[13] While the massive circuit of walls was successful in fortifying the city over the succeeding centuries, this episode revealed that an indomitable force lay behind the grand mural protection. As they did on that October night in 1268, the patron saints continued to fuse with the city walls to stop any breach and thereby maintain Cologne's civic integrity. The city was saved by its most formidable defense system—the patron saints of Holy Cologne.[14]

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[11] This is noted in Gotfried von Hagen's metrical history of Cologne. See: Ulrike Bergmann, "Kölner Bilderschnitzwerkstätten vom 11. bis zum ausgehenden 14. Jahrhundert," in: Ulrike Bergmann, ed., *Schnütgen-Museum. Die Holzskulpturen des Mittelalters (1000–14000)* (Cologne: Schnütgen-Museum, 1989), pp. 19–63, p. 24ff; R. Dieckhoff, *Der Name der Freiheit* (Cologne, 1988), p. 31.

[12] Interestingly, the event took place between the feast days of these two saintly groups, as St. Gereon and the Theban Legion are honored on October 10 while St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins are celebrated on October 21. Probably of early fourth-century origin, the cult of the Theban Legion developed around the site of the later Romanesque church of St. Gereon in Cologne. According to their legend, Gereon and fifty soldiers of the Theban Legion were martyred at Agaunum under orders of Emperor Maximian.

[13] Such an association would seem to stem from the notion of the *Hortus Conclusus* (Enclosed Garden) as a symbol for virginity, particularly in regard to the Virgin Mary. See Brian E. Daley, "The 'Closed Garden' and the 'Sealed Fountain': Song of Songs 4:12 in the Late Medieval Iconography of Mary," in *Medieval Gardens*, (ed.) Elizabeth B. Macdougall (Baltimore: Dumbarton Oaks, 1986), pp. 253–78.

[14] Stefan Lochner's "Altarpiece of the City Patron Saints" is perhaps the most well-known pictorial example of the portrayal of saints as civic patrons of Cologne, including the Three Magi, the Eleven Thousand Virgins, and St. Gereon and companions flanking the Virgin and Child like a holy phalanx of sacred defense. See Julien Chapuis, *Stefan Lochner. Image Making in Fifteenth-Century Cologne* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), esp. pp. 58–66; Rolf Lauer, Christa Schultze-Senger, and Wilfried Hansmann, "Der Altar der Stadtpatrone im Kölner Dom" *Kölner Domblatt*, 52 (1987), pp. 9–80.

This miraculous protection of the city was commemorated in a plaque that was placed on the site of the battle, a hundred years later, as though visually reinforcing the spot where the wall was breached by depicting its miraculous defense. (fig. 16.4) Today, a modern copy marks the site, while the original is displayed in the Köln Stadtmuseum. (fig. 16.5) The relief, created circa 1378, portrays the event as a battle between good and evil, as angels and saints fight for the city, while the devil is placed on the outside, fighting on behalf of the besieging archbishop. The inscription records only the date of the event and the fact that the wall was breached. It is the image that conveys the story and elaborates upon its significance. While the bishop's forces charge the wall, the citizens of Cologne are stationed atop the ramparts, visible between the crenellations. The attacking forces are shown breeching the walls and fleeing, via a brilliant conceit with the two central riders, one of whom plunges through the hole in the wall, while the other retreats from it. These two figures imply a temporal narrative of breach and retreat, encapsulating the spatial dynamics of the skirmish. Most noteworthy is the depiction of the patron saints of Cologne standing atop the city walls—serving as holy reinforcements to the civic defenders. To the left, St. Gereon and his companions are manifest in the six male soldiers. To the right, the Eleven Thousand Virgins of Cologne are evoked by six female figures. Above them, two citizens of Cologne pray to an image of the Crucified Christ. This beseeching gesture is echoed by the clasped hands of the twelve patron saints directly below. A clear hierarchy is established, with Christ at the top, under whom the twelve saints appear as an evocation of twelve apostolic figures. The presentation of a seemingly apostolic group of twelve local patrons echoes the arrangement of the open position of two nearly contemporary altarpieces—the Claren-Altar from the Convent of Sankt Clara am Römerturm in Cologne and the Marienstatt altar from the Cistercian convent of Marienstatt.[15] These local saints act

[15] These are discussed in Chapter 6 of Montgomery, 2009, pp. 83–98. Regarding the Claren-Altar, see also: Hans Peter Hilger, "Der Clarenaltar im Dom zu Köln," *Kölner Domblatt*, 43 (1978), pp. 11–22; Christa Schulze-Senger, "Der Claren-Altar im Dom zu Köln. Bemerken über Konzeption, technischen Aufbau, Gestaltung und gegenwärtige Restaurierrung eines Kölner Groβ-Altars," *Kölner Domblatt*, 43 (1978), pp. 23–36; Amy Em Kirn, *The St. Clare Altarpiece: A Re-evaluation of a Fourteenth Century Double Transformation Altar from Cologne* (Ph.D. diss, Florida State University, 1980); Norbert Wolf, *Deutsche Schitzretabel des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 2002), pp. 84–94; Christa Schulze-Senger and Wilfried

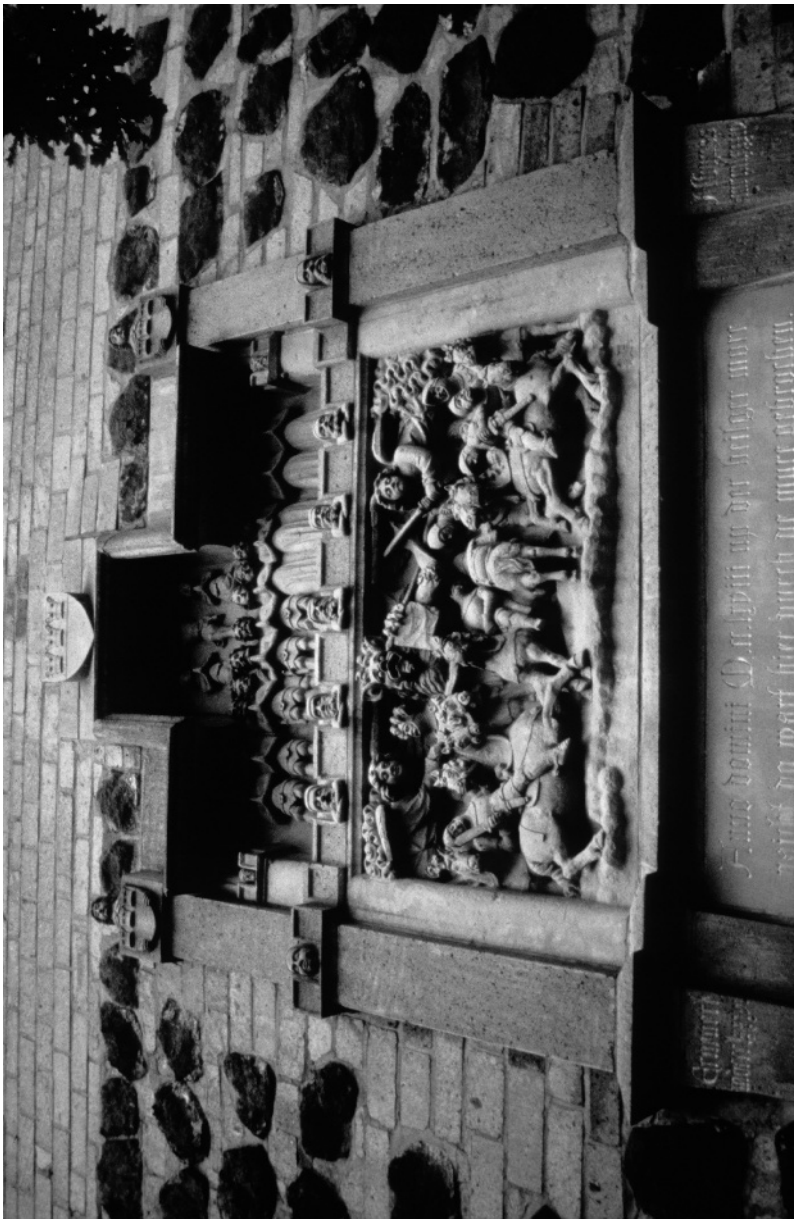

Fig. 16.4 Relief Commemorating the Defense of Cologne on October 14–15, 1268, *c.* 1378 Modern copy in situ on the south wall of Cologne near the Ulrepforte. Photo: author.

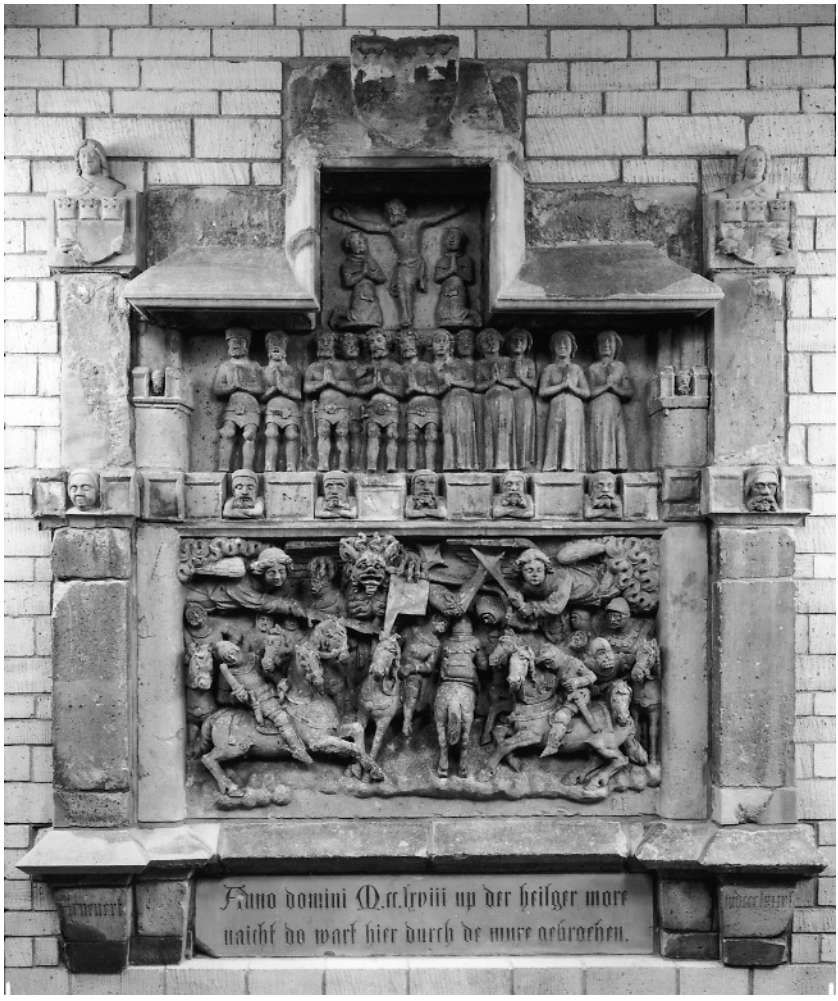

Fig. 16.5 Relief Commemorating the Defense of Cologne on October 14–15, 1268, *c.* 1378, Cologne, Stadtmuseum. Photo: Rheinisches Bildarchiv, Cologne.

as intercessors between Christ and the soldiers defending the walls below. They are mustered by Christ in response to the pious pleading of the citizens. It is hagiographically consistent that the citizens of Cologne are not shown as the active agents of civic defense, but rather as beckoning to the actual urban defenders. The patron saints hold the line, even visually heightening (and thus reinforcing) the walls, underscoring their role as patrons and defenders of Cologne. This connection fosters a perception of the sacred and ethereal co-existing with the solid and secular, as the distinction between these two seemingly opposite states is blurred. The patron saints are linked with the walls of the city, establishing an image of Cologne as an impenetrable sacred fortress. In portraying the event, the plaque fosters a cognitive reenactment of the miracle, as the miracle is presented to the eyes (and thereby recounted in the mind) of the viewer.

Certainly the presence of St. Gereon and his companions from the Theban Legion is not surprising, given their status as soldiers and the martial nature of the miracle, but what of St. Ursula and her companions? How was a group of virgin pilgrims transformed into one of the most potent and active weapons in Cologne's defensive arsenal? The role of the Eleven Thousand Virgins as sacred defenders of the city goes back to the legend of their martyrdom, which purportedly occurred in the fourth century.[16] According to their *passio*, as fully

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Hansmann, *Der Clarenaltar im Kölner Dom. Dokumentation der Untersuchung, Konservierung und Restaurierung* (Worms: Wernersche Verlagsgesellschaft, 2005). Regarding the Marienstatt altar, see: Wolf, 2002, pp. 112–21; Eduard Trier, "Der St.-Ursula Altar in Marienstatt," in: *Marienstatter Gesammelte Aufsätze. Festschrift zum 750-Jährigen Gründungsjubiläum 1212–1962*, ed. Mönchen der Abtei Marienstatt (Marienstatt: Buch-und Kunsthandlung der Abtei Marienstatt, 1962), pp. 29–33; Rainer Palm, "Enzelheiten am Marienstatter Retabel," in: *750 Jahre Abteikirche Marienstatt. Festschrift zur Kirchweihe 1977*, (Marienstatter Aufsätze V), ed. Mönchen der Abtei Marienstatt (Marienstatt: Buch-und Kunsthandlung der Abtei Marienstatt, 1977), pp. 35–60; Winfried Wilhelmy, "Der Marienstätter Altar," in: *Hochgotischer Dialog. Die Skulpturen der Hochaltäre von Marienstatt und Oberwesel im Vergleich* (Worms am Rhein: Wernersche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1993), pp. 11–48; Harald Keller, "Der Flügelaltar als Reliquienschrein," in: *Studien zur Geschichte der europäischen Plastik. Festschrift Theodore Müller zum 19. April 1965* (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 1965), pp. 125–44, esp. pp. 128–29; Franz Bock, "Der Flügel-Altar der ehemaligen Cisterzienser-Abteikirche Marienstatt," *Annalen des Vereins für nassauische Altertumskunde und Geschichtsforschung*, IX (1868), pp. 330ff; P. Gilbert Wellstein, *Die Cisterzienser-Abtei Marienstatt* (Limburg, 1955), esp. pp. 109ff; Fr. Witte, *Tausend Jahre deutsche Kunst am Rhein* (Berlin, 1932), I, p. 91.

[16] The principal studies on the legend and cult of the Eleven Thousand Virgins of Cologne are Oskar Schade, *Die Sage von der Heiligen Ursula und den Elftausend Jungfrauen. Ein Beitrag zur Sagenforschung* (Hannover: Carl Rümpler, 1854); Johann

developed by the late twelfth century, the holy virgins were martyred upon their return from a pilgrimage to Rome. Arriving by boat, the virgins landed in Cologne just as it was under siege by the Huns. Unable to capture the city, and filled with bloodlust, the Huns slaughtered the hapless pilgrims as they disembarked. In the aftermath of the

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Huber Kessel, *St. Ursula und ihre Gesellschaft. Eine kritisch-historische Monographie* (Cologne: Verlag der M. DuMont-Schauberg, 1863); Albert Gereon Stein "Die heilige Ursula und ihre Gesellschaft. Ein kirchenhistorischer Versuch," *Annalen des historischen Vereins für den Niederrhein*, 26–27 (1874), pp. 116–22; Joseph Klinkenberg, "Studien zur geschichte der Kölner Märterinnen," *Bonner Jahrbücher*, 88 (1889), pp. 79–95; 89 (1890), pp. 105–34; 93 (1892), pp. 130–79; L.M.A. Maugenre, *Ste Ursule et ses legions* (Bruges, 1903); H.J. Brühl, *Die hl. Ursula* (Hamm, 1906); Wilhelm Levison, "Das Werden der Ursula-Legende," *Bonner Jahrbücher. Jahrbücher des Vereins von Altertumsfreuden im Rheinlande*, 132 (1927), pp. 1–164; Guy de Tervarent, *Le légende de Saint Ursule dans la literature et l'art du moyen age*, 2 vols. (Paris: Les Éditions G. van Oest, 1931); Veronika Hopmann, "Aus der Geschichte der Ursulaverehrung bis zur Grünung des Ursulinen-Ordens," in *Beiträge, VII. Jahrbuch des Verbandes selbständiger deutscher Ursulinenklöster* (Cologne, 1932); Joseph Solzbacher and Veronika Hopmann, *Die Legende der hl. Ursula* (Cologne: Wienand Verlag, 1964); Veronika Hopmann, "Ursula" in: *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, X, (Freiburg, 1965), pp. 574ff; Nancy Gauthhier, "Origine et premiers développements de la légende de Ste Ursule à Cologne," in *Comptes rendu de l'Académie des Inscriptions* (1973), pp. 108–19; Frank Günther Zehnder, *Die Heilige Ursula und ihre elftausend Jungfrauen* (Cologne: Wallraf-Richartz Museum, 1978); Françoise Bardon, "De la passio à la peinture: Analyse historique du récit verbal de la légende d'Ursule," *Revue belge d'archéologie et d'histoire d'art* 52 (1983), pp. 43–79; Frank Günter Zehnder, *Sankt Ursula. Legende-Verehrung-Bilderwelt* (Cologne: Wienand Verlag, 1985); Montgomery, 1996; Joan A. Holladay, "Relics, Reliquaries, and Religious Women: Visualizing the Holy Virgins of Cologne," *Studies in Iconography*, 18 (1997), pp. 67–118; Scott B. Montgomery, "Corporate Corporeality: The Cult of St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins," in *Old Masters in Context: Romanino's "Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine"* (Brooks Museum of Art Bulletin, No. 4), Victor Coonin, ed. (Memphis: Brooks Museum of Art, 2003), pp. 37–49; Montgomery, 2009. Additionally, numerous publications of the legend and miracles exist, including P.d.S.J. Barry, *La devotion à la glorieuse Saincte Ursule, la toute aymable mere des Ursulines* (Lyon, 1645); Hermann Crombach, *S. Ursua vindicate. Vita et martyrium S. Ursulae et sociarum undecim millium virginum* (Cologne: Hermann Mylii Birckmann, 1647); A. Valentiennes, *La gloire de s. Vrsule divisee en deux parties: La premiere contient l'histoire & martyre des onze mille vierges, avec quelques considerations la dessus. La deuxieme est un abregé de la vie d'aucunes filles de s. Vrsule, signalées en sainteté. Recueille par un pere de la Companie de Jesús* (Paris: Jean Boucher, 1656); N.N. De Barry, *La dévotion à la glorieuse sainte Ursule et à ses saintes compagnes, et l'assistance merveilleuse qu'elle accorde à leurs dévotes*, (Anvers, 1754); Ludwig Reischert, *Lebensgeschichte und Märtyrtod der hl. Ursula Prinzessin von Britannien und ihrer Gesellschaft* (Cologne, 1837); Engelbert-Michael-Joseph Heinen, *Leben, Fahrten und Märtyrtod der heiligen Ursula und ihrer Gesellschaft* (Cologne, 1838); J.B. Dutrond, *La légende de Sainte Ursule princesse Britannique et de ses onze mille vierges d'après les tableaux de l'eglise Sainte-Ursule à Cologne* (Paris: Franz Kellerhoven, 1860); Pamela Sheingorn and Marcelle Thiébaux, trans., *The Passion of Saint Ursula and The Sermon on the Birthday of Saint Ursula* (Toronto: Peregrina Publishing Co., 1996).

massacre, a heavenly army of Holy Virgins appeared and drove off the Huns, thereby liberating the city. This undefeatable supernatural legion was one and the same as the seemingly defenseless virgins whom the invaders had recently dispatched. The *passio Regnante Domine* notes that the Huns were terrified and driven to flight by an army likened to eleven thousand heads, a curious description that seems to beg for a parallel with the seemingly endless supply of holy heads and head reliquaries that later populated the city's many churches.[17] The martyrdom of the Eleven Thousand Virgins facilitated the salvation of Cologne from its most terrifying enemy. Upon being thus spared, the people of Cologne emerged from the city and buried their martyred saviors in mass graves to the north, outside the walls, in accordance with Roman custom. Thus began the association between the Eleven Thousand Virgins and the defense of Cologne. The Eleven Thousand Virgins of Cologne eventually became identified not only with the defense of the city, but with the city walls—forming a veritable sacred perimeter around Cologne. This association was reinforced by the events of October 14–15, 1268. Just as they had rescued the city from the nefarious Huns, so too did the Holy Virgins of Cologne save their city from the evil forces of Engelbert II von Falkenstein. (The 1378 plaque clearly portrays these forces as evil, for they fight on the side of the Devil). This connection is made explicit in a drawing by Augustin Braun from 1619 that not only illustrates the events of October 1268, but conflates them with the tale of the Eleven Thousand Virgins' initial rescue of the city from the Huns.[18] (fig. 16.6) In the lower foreground, Braun depicts the attacking forces fleeing, while soldiers of Cologne can be seen through the breach in the wall near the Ulrepforte. Above, a mighty force of heavenly warriors—both male and female—reveals the real reason for the flight of the besieging army, as St. Ursula, St. Gereon and their respective companions stream down from the clouds, led by two militant angels. Such an image doubtless conjured the tale of the martyrdom of the Eleven Thousand Virgins and their subsequent heavenly defeat of the Huns. It would appear that Augustin Braun was endeavoring to make this particular point in his drawing. The elevated placement of a likeness of the 1378 relief, surrounded by eleven shields emblazoned with the civic arms of Cologne, adds a dimension of his-

[17] Zehnder (1985), p. 33.
[18] Zehnder (1985), p. 82.

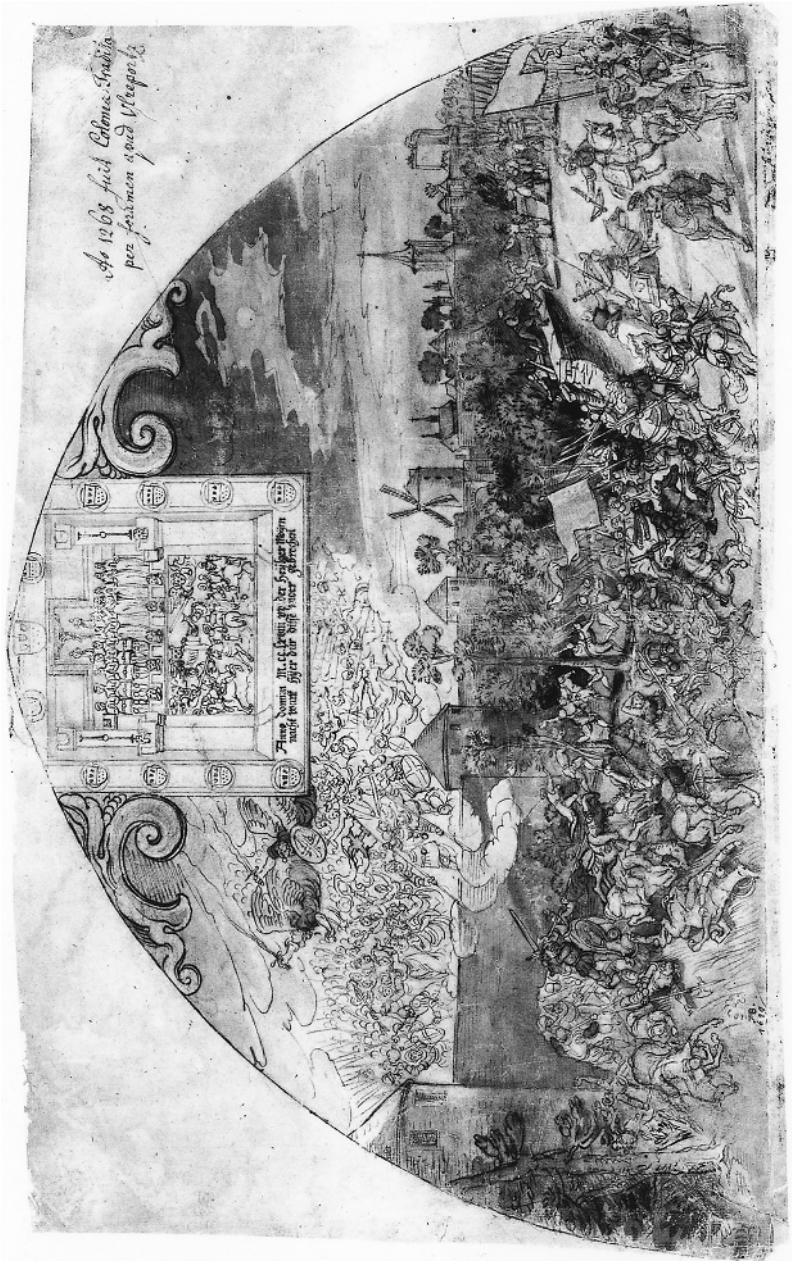

Fig. 16.6 Augustin Braun (act. in Cologne 1590–1639), Defense of Cologne on October 14–15, 1268 and the Commemorative Relief of 1378. Colored drawing. 1619. (27 × 43.5 cm). Kölnisches Stadtmuseum, Graph. Sammlung. Photo: Rheinisches Bildarchiv, Cologne.

torical reckoning with regard to the plaque. Here the plaque's imagery is fleshed-out, adding both a narrative of the 1268 miraculous defense of the city, and a visual nod to the original miracle through which the recently-martyred Virgins saved the city. The distant past is linked to the recent past and the present, as the defense of Holy Cologne is portrayed as a string of miraculous events continually carried out by these civic patrons.[19] A parallel might also be drawn between the resolute virginity of the saints and the impenetrable walls of the city. In erecting the 1378 relief, the citizens of Cologne reinforced this connection, as the Eleven Thousand Virgins were depicted as a vital, and even virile, component of the sacred defense system of the city.

The discovery of the mass graves of the holy martyred virgins during the construction of a new circuit of walls in 1106 prompted an increased identification of the saints with the city walls.[20] The bones were literally revealed as part of the civic fortifications. The extension of the fortified ring of Cologne unearthed the greatest weapon in the civic defensive arsenal—the relics of the Holy Virgins of Cologne. A lengthy series of excavation campaigns were begun to extract and identify the bodies of the martyrs. The subsequent unearthing of thousands of bodies, believed to be the Eleven Thousand companions of St. Ursula, provided an abundance of holy relics that were distributed to every church in Cologne. While a successful and far-reaching relic trade ensued, with large quantities of relics being sent to locations across the map of Europe, the greatest concentration of relics remained in Cologne, particularly in the Church of the Eleven Thousand Virgins

[19] Interestingly, the tale of the siege by the Huns is itself the product of hagiographic embroidery, as the Huns never advanced as far as Cologne. It would seem as though they were inserted into the narrative of the city's history as a result of the evolving tale of the Eleven Thousand Virgins, as a means of both explaining their martyrdom and illustrating their benevolent protection of Cologne.

[20] Victor de Buck, "De S. Ursula et undecim milibus sociarum virginum et martyrum Coloniae Agrippinae," *Acta Sanctorum.*, Octobris IX, (Brussels: Bollandists, 1858), pp. 73–303, esp. p. 167 and 239. The impetus for the construction of the new circuit of walls was Emperor Henry IV seeking refuge in Cologne from his son, Henry V. The emperor urged the strengthening and expansion of the fortifications to encircle several extra-mural settlements, notably that of Niederich with the churches of St. Kunibert and the Holy Virgins. To this end the existing walls were strengthened and a series of ditches and earthworks were erected around the three suburbs of Niederich, Airsbach, and the Holy Apostles. This ring of outer fortifications was later replaced by a stone wall in 1180. See Paul Strait, *Cologne in the Twelfth Century* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1974), pp. 30–3 and maps on pp. 48–9; Levison (1927), pp. 107ff; Tervarent (1931), p. 21.

(known today as the Church of St. Ursula). By the fourteenth century, the cult of the Eleven Thousand Virgins in Cologne was characterized by ubiquity and propinquity throughout Europe. As such, they appear to become part of the citizenry of Cologne, as present and active inhabitants. They were akin to a sacred army garrisoned throughout the city—ever-present, proximate, and reassuring in their protective potency. The effectiveness of this invincible holy battalion was demonstrated at the Ulrepforte during the unsuccessful siege of 1268.

The events of 1268 and the creation of the commemorative plaque in 1378 should be seen within the larger context of the role of the saints as civic defenders. The plaque not only commemorates an event—it visually establishes the notion of the patron saints as literally part of the city wall via a cognitive linking of bones and stones. It ought not to be seen as a historical illustration, but rather as a visual construction of a perceived reality of sacred defense. In fashioning a hagiomorphic image of civic protection, it was necessary to present the patron saints in a familiar, tangible form. The stones represent the bones in a manner analogous to the visual fusion of relics and walls that is fostered by the placement of skull-filled relic niches in the walls of the thirteenth-century choir of the church of the Eleven Thousand Virgins.[21] The relief appears to consciously reference the contemporary visual culture of the Eleven Thousand Virgins that would have been readily familiar to all denizens of fourteenth-century Cologne. The Holy Virgins appear as sweet-faced, nearly identical figures, echoing the form of the numerous reliquary busts that were produced from the late thirteenth century onward.[22] Indeed the period of the greatest

[21] On the massing of relics in compartments in the nave and apse of the Holy Virgins' titular church, see Oscar Karpa, *Kölnische Reliquienbüsten der gotischen Zeit aus dem Ursulakreis (von 1300 bis ca. 1450)*, (Düsseldorf: Druck und Verlag L. Schwann, 1934), pp 18ff; Albert Gereon Stein, *Die Pfarre zur heiligen Ursula in Köln* (Cologne, 1888), pp. 131ff; Anton Legner, "Kölnische Hagiophilie. Die Domreliquienschränke und ihre Nachfolgeschaft in kölner Kirchen," *Kölner Domblatt* 51 (1986), pp. 195–274.

[22] Regarding the reliquary busts, see: Montgomery (2009); Montgomery (1996), pp. 307–62; Holladay (1997); Karpa, 1934; Ulrike Bergmann, ed., *Schnütgen-Museum. Die Holzskulpturen des Mittelalters (1000–1400)* (Cologne: Schnütgen-Museum, 1989), pp. 19–63 and relevant catalogue entries; Ulrike Bergmann, "Die gotischen Reliquienbüsten in St. Kunibert," *Colonia Romanica* (Jahrbuch des Fördervereins Romanische Kirchen Köln, e.v.), VII (1992), pp. 131–46; Ulrike Bergmann, "Eine kölnische Ursulabüste im Dom," *Kölner Domblatt* LVII (1992), pp. 305–9; Michael Komanecky, "Reliquary Bust of an Unknown Boy Martyr," *Yale University Art Gallery Bulletin* XL/1 (Spring 1987), pp. 26–32; Gerhard Schneider, "Eine kölner Ursulabüste in Zürich," *Kölner Domblatt* XLVII (1982), pp. 184–49; Charles Eugene von Nostitz,

production and proliferation of these reliquary images was the third quarter of the fourteenth century—just prior to the creation of the commemorative relief.[23] By the time of the relief's creation in 1378, large numbers of similarly-featured reliquary busts of the Holy Virgins could be found throughout Cologne. Indeed it would have been difficult for a citizen of Cologne to not have been familiar with the largely standardized appearance of these reliquary figures. It seems likely that the depiction of the Holy Virgins defending the walls was predicated by the familiar sight of the plethora of reliquary busts on altars and carried in procession throughout the city. A series of uniformly-portrayed virgins with sweetly-smiling faces could hardly help but conjure up the legions of like-fashioned reliquary busts, whose very similarity provides them with their unique corporate identity as members of the host of Eleven Thousand Virgins.[24] The reliquary busts, which literally flesh-out the presence of the saints within their relics, would be appropriate models upon which to base subsequent images of these civic patrons. Reliquaries, and their attendant relics, provide palpable assertions of the reality of the saints' presence and power, most dramatically in visual terms, but also in addressing other senses.[25] The cognitive or perceptual interface between viewer and reliquary figure facilitated a conflation between reliquaries and their contents. Since relics were held to be the saints, the reliquary took on the guise of the saint's true visage. Some of this interactive language was translated

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Late Gothic Sculpture of Cologne, 2 vols. (Ph.D. diss., New York University), 1978; Hans Peter Hilger, "Eine böhmische Reliquienbüste der Parlerzeit in St. Ursula in Köln," *Wallraf-Richarts-Jarhbuch* XXXIII (1971), pp. 71–84; Alexander Schnütgen, "Vier kölnische Reliquienbüsten der Hochgotik," *Zeitschrift für christliche Kuns*t XXI (1908), p. 34 and plate III.

[23] This is supported by the survival rate of busts from this period. See Karpa (1934); Bergmann (1989).

[24] On the consciously visual group identity of the reliquary busts, see Montgomery (2009), esp. pp. 59–81; Montgomery (1996), pp. 307–62.

[25] Among the most dramatic examples of the ability of relics/reliquaries to visually suggest the participation of other senses can be found in the miracle of the singing heads of Esrom. A fourteenth-century account records that thirteen heads of the Holy Virgins, placed on the main altar of the Cistercian abbey at Esrom, Denmark, miraculously began singing a response to the "Te Deum" at Matins on the Christmas Eve vigil. "Icy furent transportées treize testes, ou cranes de la Compagnie des onze mille Vierges, & colloquées reverement sur le Maitre Autel.... La veille de Noël, à la fin des Matins de la feste, comme les Religieux eurent entonné le *Te Deum laudamus, te Dominum confitemur*, les treize testes des Saintes Vierges respondirent d'un chant articulé, mais celeste: *Te aternum Patrem Omnis terra veneratur*." In: A. Valentiennes (1656), pp. 40–41.

to the relief plaque, via the visual and cultic associations between the Holy Virgins and their legion reliquary busts. If the reliquary busts asserted the saints' very real presence, then their evocation in the relief drew the viewer into the understanding that the holy defenders depicted were, in fact, these same Holy Virgins. Portrayed in such a way as to resemble what a citizen of Cologne would expect, the Holy Virgins on the plaque conjured not only the identity, but the power and proximity of these holy civic benefactors. They look as one might expect them to appear, and through this visual association one is convinced that the saints will also act as expected, as demonstrated in the narrative of civic protection conveyed in the relief.

The visual association would not be lost on the citizens of Cologne, familiar with the ubiquitous and benevolent smile of these Holy Virgins, whose reliquary busts would be visible in every church in Cologne, often displayed *en masse* emphasizing not only their group identity but also their collective cohesion and civic protection. To be sure, one of the advantages of such reliquaries was their portability, which enabled the relics to be carried in procession throughout the city and to the city walls to serve as protectors during sieges.[26] Thus, the depiction of the Eleven Thousand Virgins on the 1378 relief draws a recognizably associative connection between the relics, manifest in their reliquary images, and the defense of the city walls. This image both reflects and helps fashion the role of the Eleven Thousand Virgins as the protectors of the sacred fortress of Cologne. Furthermore, the

[26] Regarding processions in Cologne with reliquary busts of the Eleven Thousand Virgins, Winheim informs us that on the feast of the Holy Virgins in 1607, relics were brought forth from the *Goldene Kammer* of St. Ursula and carried in procession: "…ex Aurea Camera reliquiae exportantur et reportantur." Erhard Winheim, *Sacrarium Agrippinae. Hoc est designatio ecclesiarum Coloniensium praecipuarum reliquiarum* (Cologne, 1607), p. 111. See Bergmann (1989), p. 57; Anton Legner, "Kölnische Hagiophilie. Die Domreliquienschränke und ihre Nachfolgeschaft in kölner Kirchen" *Kölner Domblatt* 51 (1986), 195–274, p. 257 n. 88. Regarding the general use of reliquary busts in procession, see Montgomery (1996), pp. 164–71. Examples of the portage of relics/reliquaries in sacred defense (from plague and foe alike) are legion. The *Liber miraculorum s. Fides*, notes that the reliquary figure of St. Foy was carried in procession at times of plague and calamity. See: Auguste Bouillet & L. Servières, *Sainte Foy, Vierge et Martyre* (Rodez, 1900), pp. 473–75; *The Book of Sainte Foy* (Book I, chapter 13), Pamela Sheingorn, translation and introduction (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), p. 78. In fourteenth-century Hungary, the head of St. Ladislas was taken into battle against invading Tatars. See: Cyrill Horváth, "Szent Lázló-legendáink eredetéröl," *Irodalomtörtéé Füzetlek* 31 (1928), pp. 28–37, esp. p. 37.

1378 relief image not only interacts with the viewer, but also interacts, via visual association, with the seemingly innumerable reliquary figures distributed throughout the city. As such, the relief engages in a dialog with not only the individual viewer, but also with the city itself.

The connection between the martyrdom of the Eleven Thousand Virgins and the defense of Cologne is further reinforced in a pair of woodcut illustrations made for Johann Koelhoff's *Cronica von der hilliger Stat van Coellen*, published in 1499. The image of the martyrdom of Ursula and her companions anachronistically portrays the massacre taking place before the late medieval walls of Cologne, behind which can be seen the recognizable profile of the cathedral, then under construction as evidenced by the prominent crane on the west tower.[27] (fig. 16.7) Recalling that the city was saved from the marauding Huns by the saintly armies of the recently-martyred virgins, this conflation of time gives the image additional meaning by expanding the temporal parameters of the overarching tale of civic protection. Just as they delivered the city from danger with their martyrdom, the holy patrons of Cologne continued to act as their civic protectors in the late medieval period. The juxtaposition of the saints and the city walls visually augments the association between the two as the principal lines of fortification of the city. The parallel alignment of the boat and the walls places the Holy Virgins as the outer defense perimeter, suggesting that they are the primary weapon in Cologne's arsenal of defense. It is even possible that this image was influenced by the 1378 relief which also dramatically connects the Holy Virgins to the city walls. As such, the woodcut would reflect the relief's effective bolstering of the link between walls and relics. The extension of the sail of the Holy Virgins' boat into the visual field of the wall strengthens this connection, as the sail appears to become part of the mural defenses. This protective sail may also allude to the image of Ursula as *Schutzmantelheilige*—Ursula sheltering her people with her mantle. As an iconic illustration of sacred benevolence and succor, the *Schutzmantelheilige* is derived from the *Madonna della Misericorida* image-type—a visual derivation that underscores the notion of *Imitatio Mariae* employed in the construction of the cult of the Holy Virgins of Cologne. The Virgin's popularity as a potent civic patron doubtless made such associations

[27] The woodcut appears on folio 223r. See Zehnder (1985), p. 81.

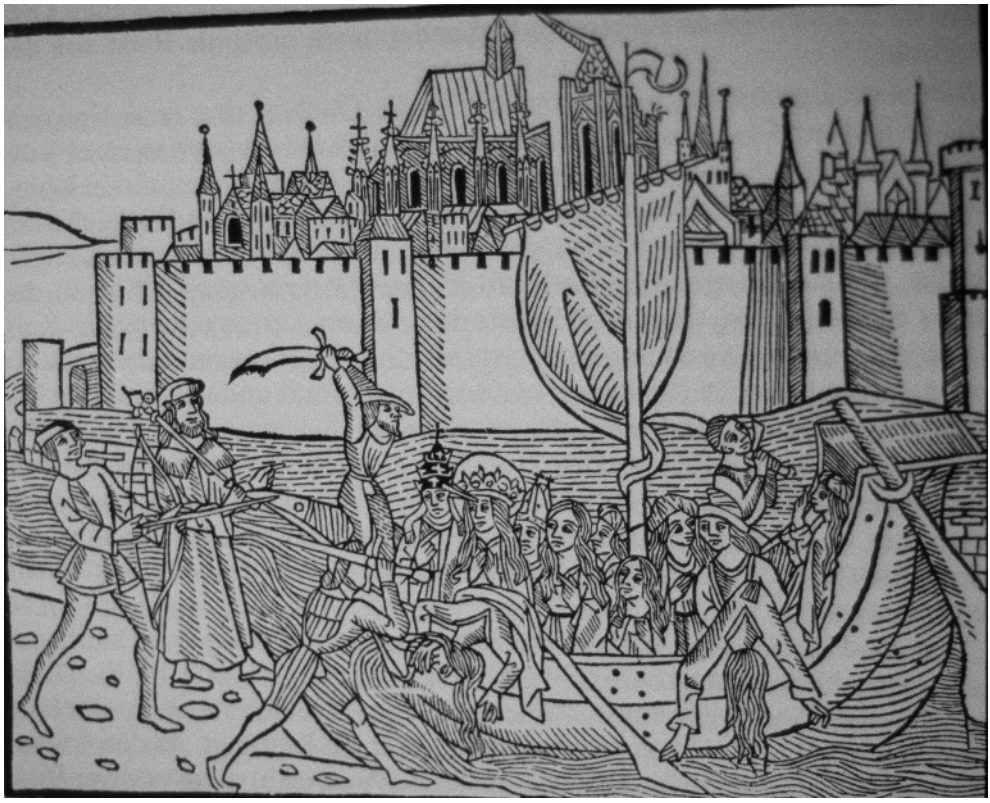

Fig. 16.7 *Martyrdom of the Holy Virgins of Cologne*. 1499. Woodcut from Johann Koelhoff, *Cronica von der hilliger Stat van Coellen*. Photo: author.

all–the-more strategic and appealing.[28] This image-type, common in late medieval Cologne, symbolized Ursula's role as a holy patron of the city, regularly interacting with its citizens as a benevolent shepherd to their flock.[29]

[28] Perhaps the most obvious case would be that of the Virgin and her patronage of Siena. See Norman (1999).

[29] Among the copious examples in Cologne, the *Schutzmantelheilige* can be found on an embroidered mid-fifteenth-century alb from St. Cecilia in Cologne (Schnütgen Museum, Cologne, Inv. Nr. P864a), an antependium of circa 1550 from a church in Cologne, now in the Schnütgen Museum (Schnütgen Museum, Cologne, Inv. Nr. P33), and late medieval sculpted figures in Cologne Cathedral and in the Marienkappelle in S. Ursula in Cologne. See: *Museum Schnütgen. Die liturgischen Gewänder—11. bis 19. Jahrhundert. Bestandskatalog von Gudrun Sporbeck* (Cologne: Schnütgen-Museum, 2001).

The important role of the Holy Virgins as a sacred defense perimeter, established in the martyrdom scene, is made more explicit in the woodcut from the Koelhoff chronicle, showing the saints defending the city from the attack by the forces of Archbishop Engelbert II von Falkenstein in October of 1268. (fig. 16.8) As in the 1378 relief depicting the same miraculous event, the archbishop's forces lay siege outside the city, while the patron saints of Cologne take position along the walls. St. Severinus, the Three Magi, St. Gereon and a companion, as well as St. Ursula and two companions are depicted as a formidable force, as they vertically enhance the wall, maintaining its integrity and the resultant security of the city. In this larger chronicle of Cologne, additional patron saints (The Three Magi and the early bishop St. Severinus) have been added to the list of holy defenders, as though updating the miracle account to better accord with the chronicle's conception of more ecumenical holy civic protection. Coming first in the codex, the martyrdom scene prepares the reader to understand this later image of the active defensive role of the patron saints, particularly the Holy Virgins, in delivering Cologne from attack by such forces as mustered by Engelbert II von Falkenstein. Though the event depicted occurred in 1268, the cathedral, visible in the background, shows the same late-fifteenth century profile that appeared in the woodcut of the martyrdom of the Eleven Thousand Virgins. Like the martyrdom scene, the holy defense of the city is shown here as both a historical and ongoing truth. Such temporal conflation, involving the fluid fusion of sacred events of the past and contemporary settings, is a common trope in hagiographic portrayal. It is an effective means of asserting the ongoing relevance and reality of the saint's recognizable proximity, not unlike the way in which the celebration of the Eucharistic Mass manifests Christ's presence, Passion, and Resurrection at the altar table. As the faithful intimately interact with Christ during the Mass, to the point of bodily ingestion, the citizens of Cologne interface with their benevolent patrons in a dynamic sensory, spatial and temporal nexus of identification. The walls provide the skin of the city's body, while the flesh, blood and muscle are made up of the urban denizens—both human and saintly. It is the holy presence, as both perimeter and contents, which insures the city's safety. Bones and stones ensure the security and prosperity of Holy Cologne.

Johann Koelhoff's *Cronica von der hilliger Stat van Coellen* is an important source for understanding the late medieval self-image of

Fig. 16.8 *Defense of Cologne on October 14–15, 1268*. 1499. Woodcut from Johann Koelhoff, *Cronica von der hilliger Stat van Coellen*. Photo: author.

Cologne.[30] In recounting the history of the city, from its Roman foundations to the late fifteenth century, the chronicle attempts to establish the historical reasons for Cologne's prosperity.[31] As the woodcuts of the city's defense indicate, among the foremost reasons for this

[30] See Severin Corsten, *Kölnische Chronik von 1499* (Hamburg: Friedrich Wittig Verlag, 1982); Wolfgang Schmitz, *Die Überlieferung deutscher Texte im kölner Buchdruck des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts* (Ph.D. diss., Cologne: Universität zu Köln, 1990), pp. 236–39; Volker Henn, "'Dye historir is ouch als eyn spiegell zo underwijsen dye mynschen…'. Zum Welt- und Geschichtsbild des unbekannten Verfassers der Koelhofschen Chronik," *Rheinische Vierteljahresblätter* 51 (1987), pp. 224–49.

[31] Given the date of its publication, and the scope of its intent, it would seem likely that Koelhoff's chronicle was inspired by Hartmann Shedel's *Liber Chronicarum*, published in Nurnburg, six years earlier in 1493.

success was the inordinately large number of patron saints that the city enjoyed. The presence of eleven thousand holy virgins, who repeatedly demonstrated their active and powerful role in civic defense, inflated the ranks of civic patrons so that Cologne could claim to have more patron saints than any other city in Europe, rivaling and even surpassing Rome in saintly patronage.

In this regard, it is noteworthy that one sees a late medieval development of imagery of St. Ursula as a protective holy benefactor of her people. This is most forcefully conveyed by figures of St. Ursula as *Schutzmantelheilige*—protecting her followers (and by extension, the city) within the walls of her mantel. (fig. 16.9) The Ursula *Schutzmantelheilige* image translates this idea into the local idiom of sanctity in Cologne. Ursula, along with her companions, shields her people from harm. While this holy prophylactic might extend to all of her devotees regardless of their location, in Cologne it would have particular resonance, due to her established role as *defensor urbis*. As the sail of the saints' ship becomes aligned with the city walls in the 1499 woodcut of the martyrdom of the Holy Virgins, so too does the mantel of the group's leader become a symbol of these same protective walls.

This association was fostered by the numerous *Ursulaschifflein*, or "Ursula-ships"—confraternities that proliferated in late Medieval Cologne.[32] Entering such a confraternity, devotees could be seen as symbolically boarding the Ship of St. Ursula, placing themselves under her protective mantel, understood as the sail of this spiritual vessel. Late medieval religious practice and imagery in Cologne thus developed a close alignment between the mantel of St. Ursula, the sail of her ship, and the city walls. The mortar that bound this all together was the ongoing presence of St. Ursula and her Eleven Thousand companions, via their relics which were distributed throughout the churches of Cologne. The most active visual agents in fleshing-out the presence and power of the Holy Virgins' relics were their legion reliquary busts. It was this active presence that facilitated the ascendancy of the Eleven Thousand Virgins to the highest rank of holy civic protectors. The omnipresence of the Holy Virgins within the city, their relics being found in every church within the urban walls, underscores

[32] Regarding these confraternities, or *Ursulabrüderschaften*, see Paul Heusgen, "Ursulabrüderschaften in Köln", *Jahrbuch des Kölnischen Geschichtsvereins* 20 (1938), p. 164ff; Hopmann (1964), pp. 61–64, 70–71; Zehnder (1978), p. 12; Zehnder (1985), pp. 73–78.

Fig. 16.9 *Ursula Schutzmantelheilige.* Altar antependium from a Church in Cologne. 1550. Cologne, Schnütgen Museum, Inv. Nr. P33. Photo: Rheinisches Bildarchiv, Cologne.

their stature as patrons and protectors of Cologne. From its establishment in the ninth century, the feast of the "*undecim milium virginum*" (Eleven Thousand Virgins) on October 21 was one of the major feasts celebrated in Cologne during the liturgical year.[33] In 1305, Archbishop Heinrich von Virneburg officially fixed October 21 as the official and obligatory feast day for the Holy Virgins in the diocese of Cologne.[34] While the saints' feast had long been established on this date, going back to the ninth century, this mandate for its celebration throughout the archdiocese evidences the growing importance of the cult and its role in the city's protection and identity.[35] The celebration of the feast became a part of civic ceremony and ritual well into the late Middle Ages. From at least 1512 onward it was customary on the vigil of this feast for the City Fathers to light eleven candles in the choir of the Church of the Eleven Thousand Virgins.[36] Such secular and governmental participation in the solemnities of the feast days of patron saints was common throughout Europe.[37] In addition to further linking the cities with their saints, such rituals connected the saints with their cities, furthering the identification of holy protection with civic reality.

By the fifteenth century the status of the Eleven Thousand Virgins had increased to the point that they were added into the civic arms of Cologne. The three crowns in the upper field represent the Three Magi, whose relics were ensconced within the great reliquary shrine in the cathedral. The Eleven Thousand Virgins, whose relics graced every church in the city, are symbolized by the eleven flames in the lower field.[38] It is noteworthy that the face of Cologne—its civic arms—was

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[33] Georg Zilliken, "Der kölner Festkalender. Seine Entwicklung und seine Verwendung zu Urkundendatierungen. Ein Beitrage zur Heortologie und Chronologie des Mittelalters," *Bonner Jahrbuch* 119 (1910), esp. pp. 108–109.

[34] Zehnder (1978), p. 11.

[35] The earliest surviving Office of this cult, an eighth-century oration and mass-formula, notes their feast day as October 21. See: Kessel (1863), pp. 153–55.

[36] Heiko Steuer, *Das Wappen der Stadt Köln* (Cologne: Greven, 1981), p. 49; Zehnder (1978), p. 11.

[37] The example, Florentine observance of the celebrations of the Feast Day of St. John the Baptist on June 24 involved great spectacle. See Richard C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), pp. 240–47.

[38] Hopmann (1964), p. 60, notes that the crowns of the Three Kings were an addition of the fourteenth century, while the flames of the Holy Virgins were added later, during the pinnacle of the cult in the fifteenth century. Copious visual evidence supports this thesis. See also Zehnder (1985), p. 199. The eleven black flames would appear to be a reference to the earliest inscription related to their cult—the so-called Clematius Inscription, a fifth-century plaque now immured in the choir of their titu-

constructed by representing the presence of the most precious relics within the city. As the Three Magi form the core of the city, concentrated in the cathedral, the Eleven Thousand Virgins establish a sacred perimeter throughout and around the city. Such an arrangement is not at all uncommon, as seen in the keys of St. Peter symbolizing Rome or the crozier of St. Pantalus emblazoned on the arms of Basel. The relics established the *praesentia* of the saints. The miraculous protection of the city proved the *potentia* of their relics. It was through their active role as guardians of the walls that the Holy Virgins became more and more identified with the city itself. As seen in the 1378 relief from the wall near the Ulrepforte and the 1499 woodcuts in the Koelhoff chronicle, numerous late medieval images stressed this connection by fleshing out the narratives of the miraculous protection of the city walls.[39] This association, as made in the 1378 plaque, eventually became so widespread and familiar that it was given symbolic form in the city

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lar church: "Divinis flammeis visionib(us) frequenter admonit(us) et virtutis magnae maiiestatis martyrii caelestium virgin(um) imminentium ex partib(us) orientis exsibitus pro voto Clematius v(ir) c(larissimus) de proprio in loco suo hanc basilicam voto quod debebat a fundamentis restituit. Si quis autem super tantam maiiestatem huiius basilicae, ubi sanctae virgines pro nominee ·XPI· sanguinem suum fuderunt, corpus alicuiius deposuerit exceptis virginib(us), sciat se sempiternis tartari ignib(us) puniendum." ("Frequently admonished by divine visions of flame and by virtue of the most majestic heavenly martyred virgins coming from the east, in fulfillment of a vow, the virtuous Clematius restored this basilica on their land from the foundation up. It should be known that if the body of anyone other than the holy virgins is deposited in this majestic basilica, built on the site where the holy virgins spilled their blood in the name of Christ, he will be punished by eternal hellfire.") (translation mine). Levison (1927), p. 4. Regarding the Clematius Inscription, see Levison (1927); Kessel (1863), pp. 15152; Stein (1874); Floβ, "Die Clematische Inschrift", *Annalen des historischen Verein für den Niederrhein* 26–27 (1874), pp. 177–96; G. Morin, "L'inscription de Clematius et la légende des Onze Mille vierges" in *Mélanges Paul Fabre. Études d'histoire du moyen age*, (ed.) G. de Manteyer (Paris: Alphonse Picard, 1902), pp. 51–64; A. Riese, "Die Inschrift des Clematius und die kölnischen Martyrien, *Bonner Jahrbücher. Jahrbücher des Vereins von Altertumsfreunden im Rheinlande* 118 (1909), pp. 236–45; Alexander Reise, *Das Rheinische Germanien in den antiken Inschrifter* (Leipzig and Berlin, 1914), p. 262, Nr. 2360; *Ornamenta Ecclesiae. Kunst und Kunstler der Romanik*, Anton Legner, (ed)., 3 vols (Cologne: Schnütgen Museum, 1985), vol. 2, p. 353. The theory that the inscription is a forgery was offered by E.A. Stückelberg, "Die Clematianische Inscrift eine Fälschung", *Basler Zeitschrift für Geschichte und Altertumskunde* 20 (1922), pp. 368–71.

[39] An emphatic example can be found in the extensive cycle of the Legend of the Eleven Thousand Virgins, painted on canvas by the Master of the St. Ursula Legend and his workshop from circa 1492–96. Now divided over numerous museums, the cycle demonstrably asserts the importance of their relics and includes the scene of the repulsion of the Huns by the heavenly army of recently-martyred holy virgins. See Zehnder (1990), pp. 382–90.

arms by the close of the fifteenth century. The eleven flames do not appear in the civic coat of arms in the 1378 relief, further suggesting that it was images such as this that eventually led to the incorporation of this signifier of the Eleven Thousand Virgins into the city's heraldic face.

Though likely to be coincidental, the parallel between the eleven flames and the eleven major gates in the city walls is suggestive and might have subsequently been read as imbued with significance, not unlike the interpretation of the discovery of bones in 1106 as the *inventio* of the relics of the Holy Virgins. Certainly the placement of eleven coats of arms, ringing the image of the 1378 plaque like a symbolic wall of civic protection in Augustin Braun's 1619 drawing could be seen as reinforcing this connection, or may be itself influenced by *kölnische* memory that upheld this notion. The Eleven Thousand Virgins became the image of the walls of Holy Cologne. Through their miracles they demonstrated an ongoing benevolent interaction with the people of their adopted city. Perhaps nowhere is this more explicitly iterated than in the 1378 relief near the Ulrepforte which both visualizes this protection and commemorates a miraculous demonstration thereof. With bones and stones, the city of Cologne set up an impenetrable line of defense that ensured the protection and prosperity of one of the most affluent cities of medieval Europe.

At first glace, it is somewhat curious that the relief was not placed at a location that enjoyed more heavy traffic, and thus greater visibility, such as a gateway. Certainly its message of sacral civic defense would be cogent to any of the gates of the city, thereby impressing upon all who entered the role of the Holy Virgins and the Theban Legion in insuring the impermeability of the walls to unwelcome visitors. Such placement would parallel the ornamentation of many city gates, such as the Porta San Niccolò of Florence, as we have seen. It would also seem to render the relief's account of the miracle more potent in terms of frequency of viewings and its attendant reiteration of truthfulness. However, by situating the relief directly on the spot of the miracle, it takes on something of the role of reliquary image—visually asserting the reality of the *locus mirabilis* and adding a narrative gloss that explicates the site's significance. Just as reliquaries demonstrate the *praesentia* and *potentia* of their contents, the relief announces the presence and power of not only the urban walls but also the holy urban protectors at the site of greatest cogency. It would appear that the placement of the relief also visually serves as a bandage for the wall, as though healing it and

protecting it at its point of injury. Considering that the patron saints literally came into contact with the wall, as depicted in the plaque, one wonders if a certain degree of sacral transference was perceived to have occurred—the walls themselves becoming akin to contact relics—the stones likened to bones through the transitive property of tertiary relics. In conceptually and perceptually fusing the walls with the relics, the erstwhile mural breach is supernaturally repaired as the wall is made even stronger than its initial material construction. In this cognitive and imaginative interaction with the populace, the saints are perceived as demonstrating their ongoing protection of the city by literally making the walls even greater than those built by human hands alone. By commemorating the miraculous repulsion of the invaders, the relief images a garrison of civic patron saints at the very spot where they might be most needed to insure the ongoing infallibility of the walls. Furthermore, in relating this at the very site, the mural fills in the wall, adding an ongoing narrative of sacro-civic impenetrability.

While not as overtly interactive as many medieval images associated with urban identity and sacred defense, such as battle standards, civic processions, and political rituals, the 1378 relief reveals the rich, dynamic realm of interface between images and viewers in the Middle Ages. Its location away from the points of entry into the city, and its immured state render the image somewhat peripheral to the more overt public expressions of civic succor, such as would be seen in Stephan Lochner's *Altarpiece of the City Patron Saints*, produced for the city counsel's chapel dedicated to St. Mary in Jerusalem.[40] This fifteenth-century ornamentation of the fabric of civic governance in the urban center paralleled an expansion of the urban defenses—all with the purpose of asserting a just and stable government.[41] However, to focus exclusively on the more obvious manifestations of images pushing and pulling perception and meaning in the mind of the viewer, is to miss some aspects of this complex dialogue. Images interact with

[40] See: Rolf Lauer, Christa Schulz-Senger, and Wilfried Hamsmann, "Der Altar des Stadtpatrone im Kölner Dom," *Kölner Domblatt* 52 (1987), pp. 9–80; J. Eisler, "Zu Fragen des Programms und der Ikonographie des 'Dombildes' in Köln," *Acta historiae atrium* 24 (1978), 133–45; Frank Günter Zehnder, ed., *Stefan Lochner Meister zu Köln. Herkunft—Werke—Wirkung* (Cologne: Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, 1993), pp. 324–25.

[41] Brigitte Corley, *Painting and Patronage in Cologne 1300–1500* (Turnhout: Harvey Miller, 2000, pp. 133–67, esp. p. 147. Corley ascribes the painting to an anonymous master whom she calls the Dombild Master.

their audiences in a wide array of manners, not always directly visually, but also through mnemonic means. The very knowledge of a protective image offers a sense of security that can guide understanding of other images, and vice-versa. Certainly the six identical companions of St. Ursula who secure the walls in the 1378 relief simultaneously shape, and are shaped by, the visually analogous hordes of their reliquary busts that populate the city. That the reliquary busts were portable and were carried in procession provides them with a sense of mobility, as though they are capable of extending their holy beneficence to all parts of the city—even to the walls themselves. Carrying this understanding in one's mind when walking past the relief on the southern perimeter of the urban walls, the sweet-faced Holy Virgins on the plaque would seem to connote the connection between the copious reliquary busts and the defense of the city. Concurrently, the image of the sacral defense of the walls would instill the viewer with an augmented understanding of the very direct and immediately perceptible role of the Eleven Thousand Virgins in the defense of the city—within and without. Though located near a major North-South transportation artery evolved from the Roman *cardo*, the plaque was not encountered with frequency, being some two-hundred meters (roughly six-hundred and fifty feet) off the roadway.[42] Given the angle of the walls, the relief would not have been directly visible from the road and would thus have been scrutinized only by those venturing beyond the main artery by ambulating alongside the walls. If one only sees the relief by actively seeking it out, or accidentally stumbling upon it, interaction with the image is based more upon incidental individual encounter than it is on grand, public propagandistic placement, such as we see in the Porta San Niccolò in Florence. It is, after all, on a stretch of wall rather than a gateway. Given that the relief was immured in a relatively low-traffic area, we must consider that its primary purpose is to assert, and even insure, the ongoing holy support of the walls, not only via the presumably infrequent optic visualizations, but also through the ongoing reality of memory and knowledge of its presence.[43] This is not unlike

[42] I thank the anonymous reader who reminded me of the key role of the N-S road near the relief.

[43] Regarding conceptions and practices of memory in the Middle Ages, see in particular the pioneering work of Mary Carruthers. Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, 2nd edition (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 2008); Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000);

the phenomenon of relics and consecrated hosts still maintaining their potency even when out of sight, as evidenced by numerous tabernacles and relic cupboards. It is gnosis that provides the most cogent form of meaning here—the interaction between image and audience is as much one of memory and understanding as it is of directly witnessing the image. In the end, what is asserted by the 1378 relief is the reality of the event and its implications for ongoing sacral defense. This reality holds currency in both visual and mnemonic manners. Past, present, and future are fused together in the forge of the viewer's mind, providing a comforting notion of benevolent holy defense. Images and audiences, eyes and minds, bones and stones—all interact in this rich, complex, and dynamic arena of civic identity and security.

Mary Carruthers and Jan M. Ziolkowski, *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003). For a broader historical analysis of memory, see: Francis A. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).

17. THE MIDDLE OF DIPTYCHS

Alfred Acres*

There were at least a few ways in which *Portraits and Prayers: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych*, a memorably revealing exhibition recently in Washington and Antwerp, could be called "touching."[1] It was touching, for example, to witness so many reunions, and not just of pictures in one collection with pictures in another from which they have long been separated. Here we were also watching reunions between individuals and those to whom they pray, between husbands and wives, and between dear friends, among others.

It was also *about* touching in the sense that so many of these objects were made to be touched—to be opened and shut, propped on a suitable surface, or tucked away to be carried elsewhere.[2] This tactile appeal is most vivid in the polished stone depicted on the reverse of many diptych panels, which avows objectness.[3] What one sees is at once more and less than an image. Someone encountering one of

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* I am grateful to John Hand for the invitation to prepare this topic for a public symposium at the National Gallery of Art in conjunction with the exhibition *Prayers and Portraits: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych.* My sincere thanks also to colleagues and other attendees who offered helpful questions and remarks. I dedicate this essay to the memory of Carol Purtle, a generous friend and beacon in the study of late medieval art, whom I was honored to join on the panel that day.

[1] National Gallery of Art, November 12, 2006–February 4, 2007; Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, March 3–May 27, 2007. See John Oliver Hand, Catherine A. Metzger, and Ron Spronk, *Prayers and Portraits: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

[2] On different kinds of evidence for this, see e.g. Hélène Verougstraete, "Diptychs with Instructions for Use" in *Essays in Context: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych*, (eds). John Oliver Hand and Ron Spronk (Cambridge, MA and New Haven: Harvard University Art Museums and Yale University Press, 2006), pp. 156–71.

[3] Hélène Verougstraete and Roger Van Schoute, "The Significance of Marblings and Other Decorative Paintings on Reverses in Early Netherlandish Painting" in *Painting Techniques: History, Materials, and Studio Practice. International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works. Contributions to the Dublin Congress, 7–11 September 1998* (London : International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works, 1998), pp. 98–100; and *idem*., "Frames and Supports of Some Eyckian Paintings," in *Investigating Jan van Eyck*, (eds.) Susan Foister, Sue Jones, and Delphine Cool (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), pp. 110–11. For highly suggestive discussion of tactile and other implications of painted marble in fifteenth-century Italian fresco, see Georges Didi-Huberman, *Fra Angelico: Dissemblance and Figuration*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), pp. 28–34 and *passim*.

these seemingly hard, gleaming surfaces on a closed diptych knows that handling will be necessary to see more and better. Since depiction of such slabs needs no illusion of relief, depth, or modeling, they have an unusually tight consonance with the paint representing them. For some of their observers, only touch will resolve uncertainty about cool stone or oil-glazed wood. And even once certified as paint, their sleek lithic claim invites fingers in a way that images of volume and space do not. One of the best-preserved and most magnetic of these occurs on the exterior of a 1522 diptych by Jan Provoost, where a dark surface, probably meant as porphyry, is alive with spatters and blooms of red, pink, and vapory orange.[4] (fig. 17.1) The other exterior panel presents a skull resting on a console framed by a shallow niche. Though mimetically ambitious about dimension, light, and shadow in precise opposition to the perfect flatness of porphyry, this corresponding panel is no less insistent about its physical palpability. But given its *memento mori* message—by this time familiar on the exterior of devotional diptychs—it is not clear how eager early observers would have been to touch the skull.[5]

Open, the diptych's interior joins a portrait of a Franciscan monk (backed by the skull) with an image of Christ Carrying the Cross (backed by the stone). (fig. 17.2) Most touching in this view are the locked gazes of Christ and the fifty-four year-old man who prays to him (his age, but not his name, is noted on the bottom of the frame). The tactile bids of the exterior thus yield to emotional, devotional, and intellectual ones within. The connection between the figures is made all the more affecting by the effort required for Christ to look backward as he is led away in the densely framed company of Mary, John the Evangelist, a soldier, and two demon-faced tormentors. With no open space among them, the claustrophobia of Christ's predicament finds serene counterpoint in the softly lit and scarcely articulated space for one man's prayer.[6] This is mutually motivated eye contact bearing

[4] Bruges, Hospitaalmuseum Sint-Janshospitaal. 50 × 40 mm. See *Portraits and Prayers*, pp. 210–17.

[5] On associations between porphyry and memorial imagery, see James Mundy, "Porphyry and the 'Posthumous' Fifteenth-century Portrait," *Pantheon* 46 (1988), pp. 37–43. This and other memorial aspects of diptychs are discussed by Laura Gelfand, "Fifteenth-century Netherlandish Devotional Diptychs: Origins and Function" (Ph.D. diss., Case Western Reserve University, 1994), pp. 139–53.

[6] Infrared reflectography revealed changes from the preparatory stages of both panels that seem to confirm the artist's wish to create this effect. The donor's setting was initially conceived as a furnished interior. The decision (evidently by Provoost rather than a subsequent artist or owner) to replace it with a colored plane increases the contrast

sentiment and thought, as savior and supplicant exchange recognition across the panels.

A different kind of connection is spelled out in the Latin inscription painted along the top of the frames:

Francisci [*chorda*] traxit ad se plurima [*corda*]

which can be translated as "Franciscan cords draw (or carry) the most hearts."[7] The terms for chords and hearts are homonyms (chorda and corda), and the painter chose to form each as an image rather than a word: a section of rope on the left and two small hearts on the right. Infrared reflectography has revealed that the underdrawing for the portrait of the monk included indications of a cord around *his* praying hands, with a loop showing to the right of them.[8] The idea appears to have been a single cord running between his bound hands and those of Christ, just as the line of text itself, which is about rope, is continuous between the panels. Eventually Provoost chose to omit that end of the cord reaching from Christ's last moments to a devotional present—possibly at the request of the monk himself. But the working idea, along with what we have seen of related textual and compositional maneuvers, reveals subtle reflection about what can happen *between* two images that are physically connected yet patently separate. Here the artist employed a single verbal statement—the sentence divided across the frames—to do part of the work, and had also considered casting a rope across the divide, as if from a boat to its dock. Having begun with this painter's layered thought about that relationship in a work produced roughly a century after the rise of painted devotional diptychs, what follows is an account of deeply imaginative ideas of contact or exchange between two conjoined pictures in a handful of earlier works. Together they, along with two contemporary works to be introduced in conclusion, reveal distinctive ways in which diptychs involve a viewer.

As in the Provoost diptych, what unites most of the pairs that were gathered for the exhibition are gazes and prayers—many of an

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between its calm space and the crunched turmoil adjacent. The crowding of that composition, in turn, was enhanced by modifications from the preparatory stage. These and other findings are summarized by Spronk in *Prayers and Portraits*, pp. 295–96.

[7] *Prayers and Portraits*, p. 210. For alternate readings of these inscriptions and a more ambiguous one on the exterior panel representing a skull, see Annette Scherer, "Fromme Rätsel. Beobachtungen zum Diptychon eines Franziskaners von Jan Provost" in *Zeichen des Christkinds. Privates Bild und Frömmigkeit im Spätmittelalter*, (ed.) Frank Kammel (Nuremberg: Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 2003), pp. 78–86.

[8] *Prayers and Portraits*, p. 296.

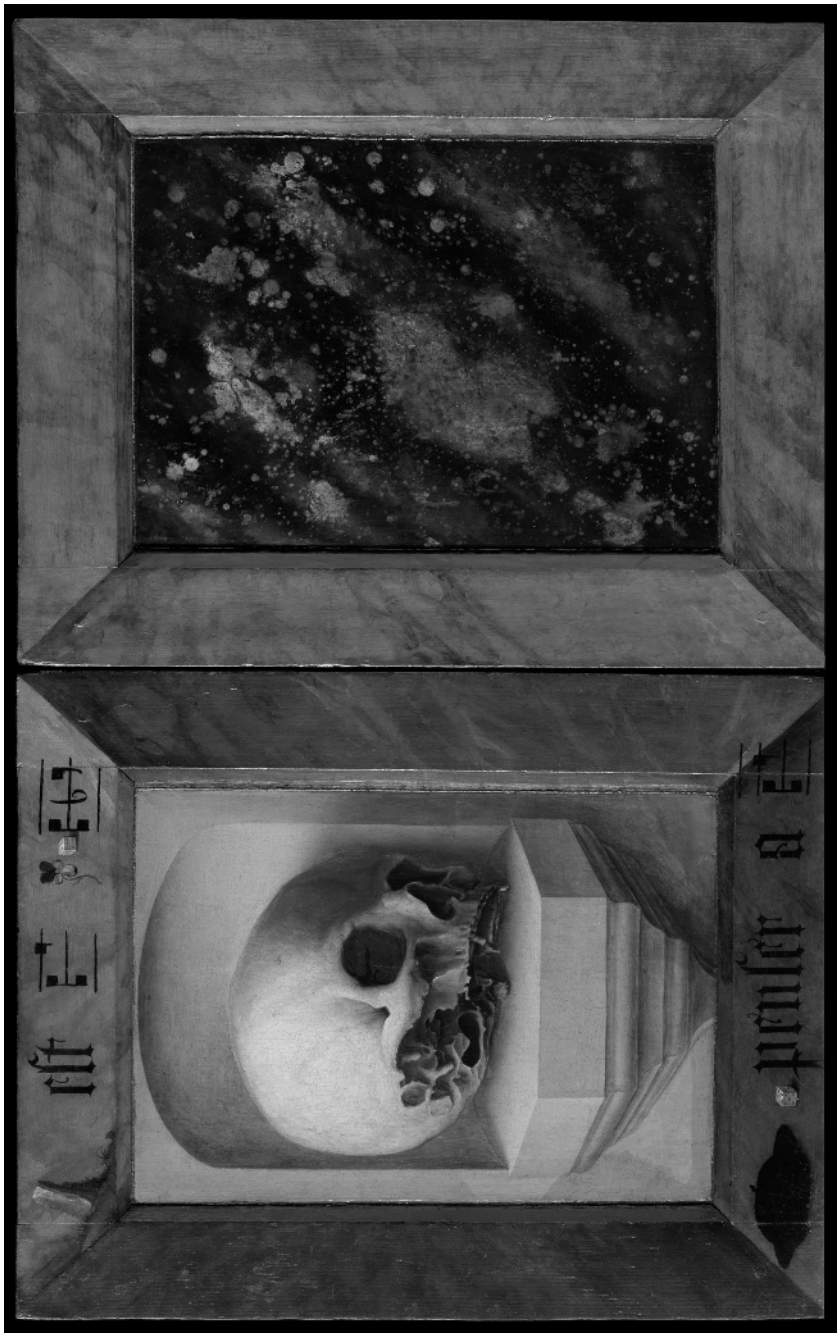

Fig. 17.1 Jan Provoost, *Imitation Porphyry* and *Skull in a Niche*. Outer panels of diptych illustrated in Figure 17.2. Copyright Lukas-Art in Flanders. Photo: Hugo Maertens.

Fig. 17.2 Jan Provoost, Diptych with *Christ Carrying the Cross* and *Portrait of a Fifty-Four-Year-old Franciscan*, 1522, 50 × 40 cm (each panel) Bruges, Hospitaalmuseum Sint-Janshospitaal, Copyright Lukas-art in Flanders. Photo: Hugo Maertens.

individual alone facing the Virgin and Child, and some in quasi-narrative situations. But the fifteenth-century works to be addressed more closely here do not include a portrait. Instead, each joins two sacred scenes. Because these diptychs are therefore not centrally defined by a lateral prayer, together they provide an opportunity to consider other conceptual implications and opportunities of the format itself. Isolating a few such diptychs can also underscore the fact that devotional portrait conjunctions were a relatively new and distinct contribution of Netherlandish painting in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[9] The much larger history of diptychs has cultivated other kinds of relationships.

The ones to be addressed here share a specific thematic kernel: paired images with Christ as a child on one side and as a dead or dying man on the other. The rationale for this focus is twofold. First, their shared theme allows closer reflection on disparate strategies; it would be harder to compare diptychs with wholly dissimilar aims. Second and more important, the conjunction of Infancy and Passion was one of the most abiding themes of non-portrait diptychs in the late Middle Ages. Yet while that relationship—between the word made flesh and that flesh in turn sacrificed—is central to Christian thought itself, it has no fixed identity in scripture, theology, or art. "Infancy" and "Passion" are themselves, in fact, unexpectedly open terms, as neither corresponds to a specific moment, event, or image. Each exists most coherently among legion configurations in cycles of prayer, art, and music. And to a degree rarely noted, the identity of either pole of Christ's life as such depends very often on its relationship—either articulated or implicit—to its counterpart. Infancy and Passion become themselves because of each other. By the fifteenth century, artists were endlessly inventive either about telegraphing sacrifice in an image of the Child or, less often, about recalling the Child in an image of his end. They understood that the apparent spatial unities of deepening pictorial naturalism allowed for novel and compelling telescopings, dilations, and other orchestrations of the mortal time separating the start and finish of a life. Like many of their contemporaries, the painters of these diptychs also pursued such expressions in single-image works—showing the Child, for example, directly below a cross formed

[9] In addition to *Prayers and Portraits*, see the essays gathered in *Essays in Context: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych*, (eds.) John Oliver Hand and Ron Spronk, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006); Laura Gelfand, "Fifteenth-century Netherlandish Devotional Portrait-Diptychs: Origins and Functions" (Ph.D. diss., Case Western Reserve University, 1994).

Fig. 17.3 The Berlin Master, Diptych with *Virgin and Angels* and *Crucifixion*, *c.* 1350–75, 14.2 × 9.2 cm (left leaf); 14.3 × 9.4 (right leaf). Baltimore, Walters Art Museum. Photo: The Walters Art Museum.

by the mullions of a window, or in a sarcophagus-like manger.[10] What will concern us is their pursuit of comparable subtlety in diptychs, where a conjunction of Infancy and Passion might on the face of it remain more prosaic, a matter less of suave internal conversation than of blunt contrast. A closer look reveals that diptychs, which give equal weight to two separate yet inseparable images, remained an irresistible and pliable venue of reflection on the idea.

Among earlier diptych pairings of Infancy and Passion, those in ivory would have been most abundant and familiar to fifteenth-century artists. An example in the Walters Art Museum, probably German work from the third quarter of the fourteenth century, juxtaposes Virgin and Child with Crucifixion.[11] (fig. 17.3) One way to explain

[10] Circle of Robert Campin, *Virgin and Child in an Interior* (London National Gallery); Geertgen tot sint Jans, *Night Nativity*, (London National Gallery). For both see Lorne Campbell, *The Fifteenth Century Netherlandish Schools* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1998), pp. 83–91, 232–39.

[11] Walters Art Museum 71.214a,b. See Peter Barnet, *Images in Ivory: Precious Objects of the Gothic Age* (Detroit: Detroit Institute of Arts, 1997), pp. 202–203.

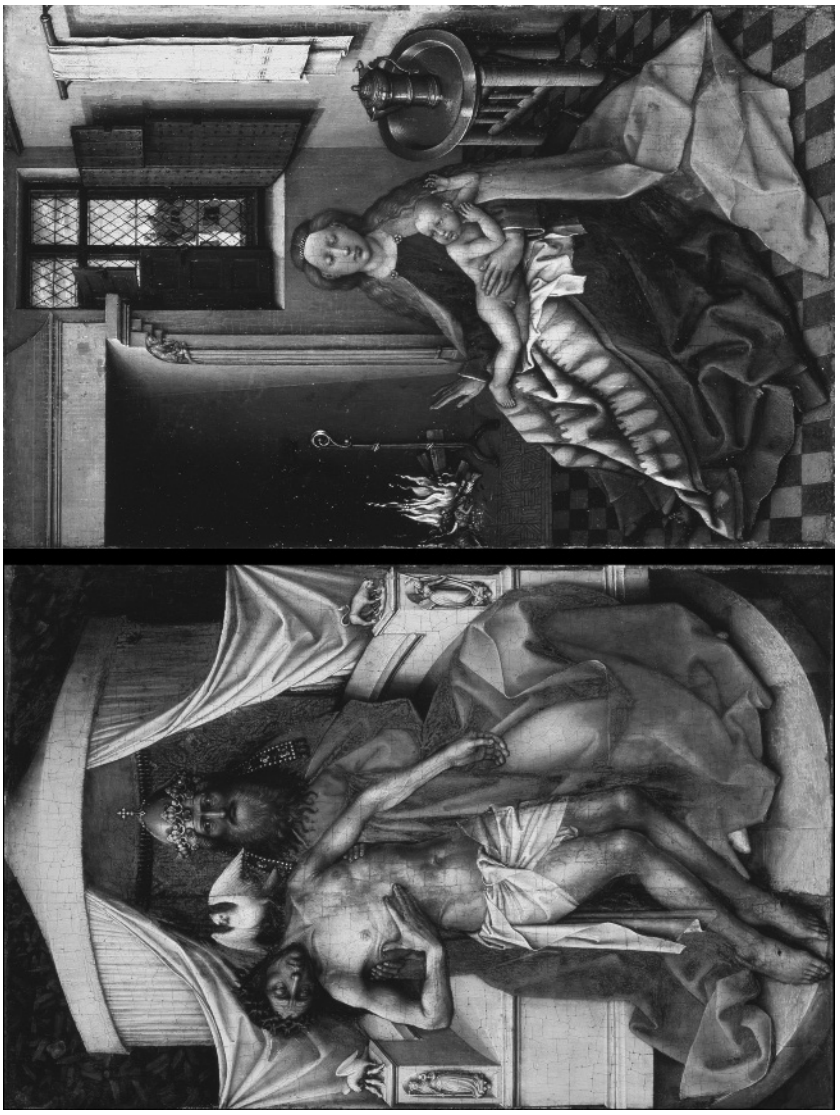

Fig. 17.4 Robert Campin, Diptych with *Trinity* and *Virgin and Child*, *c.* 1430s, 34.3 × 24 (painted surface left panel); 28.5 × 18.5 (painted surface right panel), Saint Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, NY.

the popularity of such pairings in late medieval diptychs is in terms of devotional efficiency: in a perfectly portable object (this ivory is about 5.5" tall), an owner had at her or his fingertips an image of Mary, an image of the Child, and an image of the sacrifice — ample ingredients for the most fundamental kinds of prayer. But many such works were made with an eye to more than efficiency, often by animating the relationship between the sides. In this *Crucifixion*, for example, the turn of the Virgin is more than a rhyme between her swaying pose and those of Christ and John; it also directs her eyes toward our left, into the happier zone of his infancy. It is hard not to see in that sideward gaze an expression of her memory, a motif used on comparable ivory diptychs of the period.

The experimentally driven fullness of depiction redefining European painting by the second and third decades of the fifteenth century seeded connective options reaching far beyond a sideward gaze. Several come to light in a diptych now in the Hermitage produced perhaps in the 1430s and attributed to Robert Campin or an artist in his sphere.[12] (fig. 17.4) The left panel shows the Holy Trinity, and the right the Virgin and Child in an interior—a combination unprecedented in Netherlandish painting.[13] Given the iconographic malleability of the Trinity, the decision to represent it as a Trinity of the Broken Body (aka *Mercy-Seat Trinity* or *Gnadenstuhl*) is not to be taken for granted. Whatever other interests it might have addressed for an owner, the subject also makes the poles of Christ's earthly life the crux of the work; beginning and end converge in an almost unmediated fashion. I say "almost" because the very idea of mediation—in the literal sense of coming between—is what we are after here. To what extent does the painter do something more than put them together? Beyond their physical inseparability, the most decisive aspect of their union may be corporeal, in that each has the body of Christ supported—at right by

[12] Hermitage, St. Petersburg 13.5" × 9.5" (framed). Though the original frames have been removed, other evidence makes it clear that they were hinged as a folding diptych with brownish marbled reverses now much abraded. There are corresponding nail holes on the reverses that were for hinges, but these were probably later hardware; *Prayers and Portraits*, pp. 62–65. See Vladimir Loewinson-Lessing and Nicolas Nicouline, *Le Musée de l'Ermitage Leningrad*, (Brussels: Centre National de Recherches Primitifs Flamands, 1965), pp. 5–20; Stephan Kemperdick, *Der Meister von Flémalle, Die Werkstatt Robert Campins und Rogier van der Weyden*, (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), pp. 126–28; Felix Thürlemann, *Robert Campin: A Monographic Study with Critical Catalogue* (Munich: Prestel, 2002), pp. 197–99, 322–23.

[13] *Prayers and Portraits*, p. 62.

earthly mother and at left by heavenly father. The painter took pains to demonstrate that this thematic symmetry was more than incidental. On each side Christ's head inclines outward as his body declines inward. Likewise, the eyes of the supporting figures turn out as their bodies angle in, toward the center of the diptych and therefore each other. The splay of their gazes and Christ's two bodies gives special gravity to the center from which they tilt.

Implications of that center become more intriguing in light of the unusual gesture of Mary's right hand (which one early commentator explained—unconvincingly—as a move to spank Jesus).[14] It might respond to the fire, which can be regarded partly as a reminder of the December date of the Nativity, and partly as a trace of the relative domestication of religious imagery associated with many early Netherlandish painters; it is as if the Virgin and Child occupy the kind of room, town (out the window) and climate that the owner of this diptych knew well. A more specific explanation of her gesture has seen it warming her palm before touching the infant.[15] This is plausible, but there is another possibility, too: the raised, open hand can be protective, either from the heat of the fire or, even more, from the fate visible in the panel just beyond it. If this is what Campin intended, it would represent an early expression of what Leo Steinberg has called the "not yet motif," being those diverse means by which Renaissance artists expressed Mary's desire to postpone her son's foreknown future—as Leonardo would do, for example, by having her reach to separate him from the lamb representing his sacrifice.[16] Such a protective intention in Campin's panel might help explain the even more unusual pose of the Child himself, who lies across her lap and twists to look back over his shoulder. His gaze is less toward her than toward the Trinity to which he belongs, and his arms are raised in a way that accentuates the rightward movement of his body. Rather than doing things he usually does in images of the Madonna, such as touching and gazing upon her, or making eye contact with the viewer, or occupying himself with a book or symbolic object, this Christ Child's attention

[14] Hugo von Tschudi, "Der Meister von Flémalle," *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen Berlin* 19 (1898), p. 97.

[15] Erwin Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting: Its Origins and Character* (New York: Icon Editions, 1971), pp. 172–73.

[16] Leo Steinberg, *The Sexuality of Christ in Renaissance Art and in Modern Oblivion*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 127.

and action are a matter entirely of *re*action—looking back to our left while stretching to our right.[17] While it is impossible to determine the specific thoughts the painter might have intended for the Child, it is equally impossible not to believe that he *has* specific thoughts—and that his unusual impulse responds to the proximity of his own broken body next door.[18]

Beyond such singular interaction among the figures, elements of the setting further reflect the painter's creative consciousness about the diptych format. Consider, for example, the sculptural elements of the heavenly throne, which operate on two thematic levels. In the niches below, personifications of Church on the left and Synagogue on the right stage the fraught, widely rehearsed conversation between the Old and New Testaments that was fundamental to Christian thought and imagery of the late Middle Ages. Immediately above them are traditional Christological symbols derived from medieval natural history: on the left the pelican feeding her young with blood pecked from her own breast—a symbol of Christ's redeeming sacrifice; and on the right, a lion animating dead cubs with a warm breath—a symbol of the Resurrection and eternal life made possible for mortal souls.[19] This is an unusual arrangement, as two distinct themes and two symbolic modes (typology below and zoology above), each operating as a pair, are stacked one above the other, not unlike subsidiary diptychs. There is also metaphorical resonance with the diptych they occupy in the upper carvings, each of which is a scene of parental sustenance that echoes the body of Christ sustained by heavenly father and earthly mother in the main scenes.

Given that such an object was likely to have been kept closed and then periodically opened for prayer, it is also worth observing that the

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[17] The most intriguing comparable reaction in a figure of the Christ Child comes decades later in Michelangelo's unfinished Taddei tondo. Renaissance thought about the Child's presumed attitude toward his fate is open to question. See a discussion in light of the Taddei tondo and other early sixteenth-century works in Malcolm Easton, "The Taddei Tondo: A Frightened Jesus?" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 32 (1969), pp. 391–93.

[18] On the matter of depicting specific intentions, see A. Acres, "Posing Intentions in Renaissance Art" in *Invention: Northern Renaissance Studies in Honor of Molly Faries,* (ed.) Julien Chapuis (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), pp. 2–19.

[19] Both beliefs are described in the twelfth book of Isidore's immensely influential *Etymologiae* (seventh century) and echo in bestiaries of the later Middle Ages. See *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*, (eds.) Stephen A. Barney, W.J. Lewis, J.A. Beach, Oliver Berghof (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 251 (lion), p. 265 (pelican).

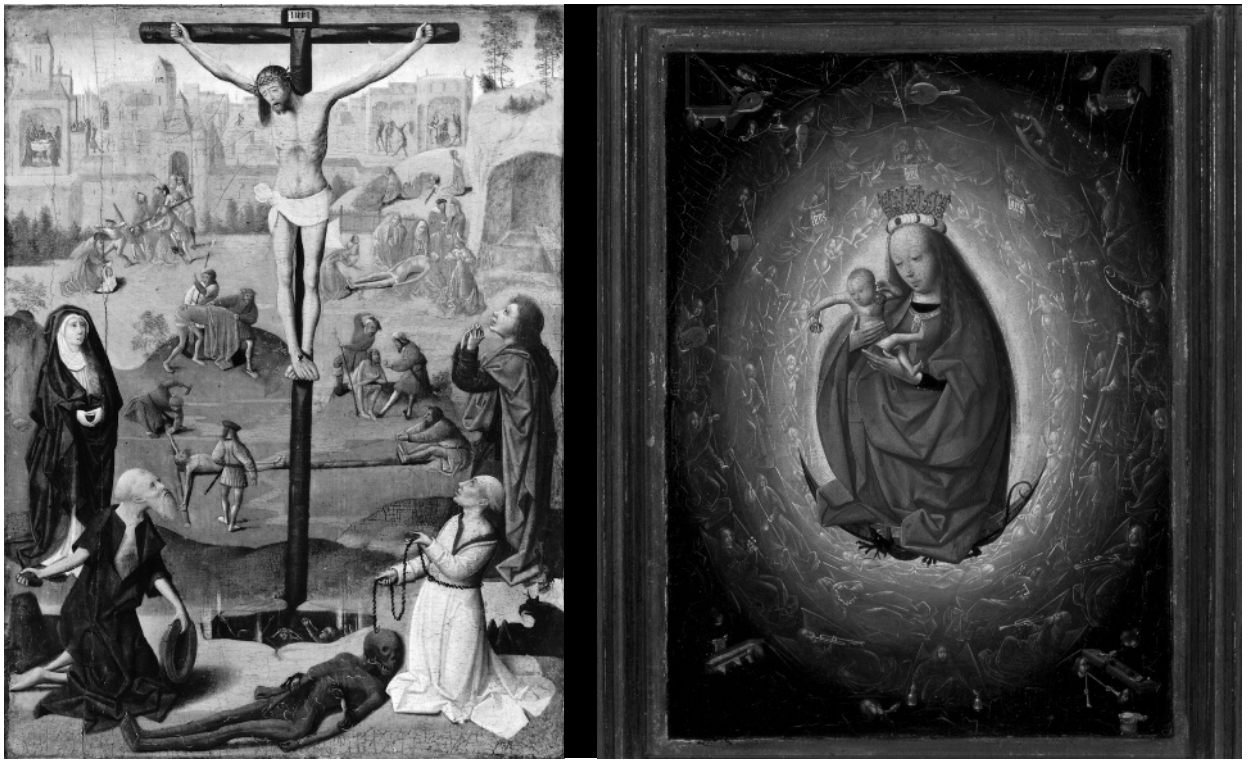

Fig. 17.5 Geertgen tot sint Jans, Diptych (separated) with *Crucifixion with Saints Jerome and Dominic and Scenes from the Passion* and *Glorification of the Virgin*, *c.* 1480s, 24.4 × 18.4 (painted surface left panel); 24.6 × 18.1 (painted surface right panel). Left: Edinburgh, National Galleries of Scotland. Photo: National Galleries of Scotland. Right: Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen. Photo: Museum Boijmans van Beuningen.

artist may have sought to evoke that operation itself from within—with shutters half-opened to reveal the window view on the right and, more significantly, the curtains of the heavenly tabernacle opened to reveal their divine center on the left. An individual holding or kneeling before the diptych is invited to wonder who or what has drawn those curtains back and continues to hold them there in this moment of seemingly temporary revelation. The outer corners of the fabric reach beyond the sides of the picture, as if held there by hands echoing those of an owner holding the diptych itself. Before dismissing speculation about such cues as too fanciful, it must be kept in mind that the diptych's highly unusual imagery (not to mention the dense resolution of the painting itself) establishes it as a work designed more to solicit reflection than simply to affirm fixed tenets. The time required to discern its connections enhanced an observer's sense of participation in the meaning of the opened, held object.

The same is true of a diptych attributed to Geertgen tot sint Jans or his shop, working probably in the 1480s. (fig. 17.5) The left panel, in the collection of the National Gallery of Scotland, presents a Crucifixion attended by Saints Jerome and Dominic along with other episodes from the Passion. The right, from the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam, shows a Glorification of the Virgin consisting of Mary in the Sun surrounded by angels.[20] Like the slightly larger Campin diptych (13.5" vs. 10.5" tall), this one is unique in the particulars of its iconography yet familiar in its alignment of a Marian image including the infant Child with one from his Passion. Again the image with the Child is on the viewer's right while the image of sacrifice is on the left (or proper right, the traditionally more honored side.)[21] But whereas the left image of the Campin diptych was a timeless subject relative to the worldly Madonna image on the right, here it is the right side that transcends earthly time and place. Anchoring a unique image rich in sources and implications, the core is derived from the account in Revelation 12:1 of the apocalyptic woman clothed in the sun, a figure long associated with Mary. Beads held by two of the angels and a wreath of roses in her hair indicate that the image was meant for

[20] *Prayers and Portraits*, pp. 88–93, with further bibliography.

[21] See Hugo van der Velden, "Diptych Altarpieces and the Principle of Dextrality" in *Essays in Context: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych*, (eds.) John Oliver Hand and Ron Spronk (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 124–55, esp. 129–33.

the rosary devotions becoming widely popular by the late fifteenth century.[22] The angels surrounding Mary form three distinct rings that must correspond to the division of those prayers into three sequences: Mary's joys, sorrows, and glories.[23] The music-making angels of the outer ring express her joys, those carrying instruments of the Passion in the middle her sorrows, and those closest to her, with the multiple wings of seraphim, express her glories. Two of these innermost beings bestow her crown.

It is necessary, however, to pull back from the immense concentration of meaningful particulars here—in both panels, for that matter—to maintain focus on our main concern with how relationship defines a diptych. What may be most striking in this case is a nearly complete breach between left and right in terms of composition, space, illumination, figural scale and, for lack of a better term, tone. It is not surprising that these panels had not always been recognized as halves of the same work.[24] The painter contrived the breach; such radical difference is no mere side-effect. One aim was surely to point the observer toward two distinct modes of experience and thought. On the left our confrontation with Christ on the cross is surrounded by a pull into the middleground and distance, where he recurs no fewer than ten times in preceding and following scenes. Drawing close to determine what is back there, an owner had to enlist his or her familiarity with gospel episodes to identify and sequence them: the Agony in the Garden, the Crowning with Thorns, the Flagellation, and so on—concluding with the Lamentation over Christ's body and the empty tomb just beyond it.[25] It is a spatially scripted journey through an individual's devotional

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[22] See e.g. Anne Winston-Allen, *Stories of the Rose: The Making of the Rosary in the Middle Ages*, (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1997); Sixten Ringbom, "Maria in Sole and the Virgin of the Rosary," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 25 (1962), pp. 326–30.

[23] James Snyder, "Geertgen tot sint Jans" in *Grove Art Online*, accessed 7/20/2008. See also James Snyder, "The Early Haarlem School of Painting II: Geertgen tot sint Jans," *Art Bulletin* 42 (1960), p. 132; Bernhard Ridderbos, "The Rotterdam-Edinburgh Diptych: *Maria in Sole* and the Devotion of the Rosary," in *The Art of Devotion 1300–1500*, (ed.) Henk van Os (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 151–56.

[24] *Prayers and Portraits*, p. 89 (noting that they were recognized as halves of a diptych by 1959).

[25] For a later employment of remote narrative to draw devotional absorption, see Reindert Falkenburg, "Marginal Motifs in Early Flemish Landscape Painting" in *Herri Met de Bles: Studies and Explorations of the World Landscape Tradition*, (eds.) Norman Muller, Betsy Rosasco, and James Marrow (Turnhout: Brepols, 1998), pp. 153–69. Such ambitious occupations of landscape with gospel imagery have also been

memory. The itinerary is given mortal urgency by the presence of death and purgatory at the base of the cross, right under one's nose.

It is in fact entirely possible that the painter wanted us to smell the wormy body—at once Adam and every man—with a head propped outward to make hollow eye contact.[26] With senses thus piqued, one may also feel the flames leaping among souls clamoring almost audibly from purgatory just a step beyond the corpse. Clustered on the ground front and center, these sharp stimuli open one channel to the adjacent panel, where earth falls away and the senses are asked to take charge. As space becomes moot, so too does the notion of sequence, gospel or otherwise. One might try to trace steps of the Passion among the instruments held by the middle ring of angels, but they follow no obvious order. Measurable routes into and out of depth on the left here give way to a seemingly slow circulation in an indeterminate ether—a motion free of origins or destination. The time in which it occurs is marked by the music of tiny angels, which no two observers will hear alike while scanning the outer half light to find performers and instruments. Accenting a variety strings, horns, and percussion are a few glinting bells. These unmistakably echo a pair held by Christ himself, which must refer to the sounding of bells during the celebration of the Mass, when the priest elevates the host after recitation of the *sanctus* (which appears thrice, as if uttered, on banners held near Mary's crown).[27] As one registers such specific sounds and the soft revolutions they accompany, senses are engaged further by the pulsation of light and, more remarkably, temperature; the cool darkness of the outer realm heats toward red, then orange, then yellow in the sun cloaking Mary.

At least one structural rhyme mediates the profound contrast between spatially plotted temporality on the left and directionless sensory immersion on the right: the shape encompassing each center. It takes a moment or longer to notice—consciously, at least—that the radiant *mandorla* around Mary has a counterpart in the arrangement

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associated in some cases with imaginary pilgrimage. See e.g. Mitzi Kirkland-Ives, "Narrative Performance and Devotional Experience in the Art of Hans Memling," (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2005), esp. pp. 48–117; Matthew Botvinick, "Painting as Pilgrimage: Traces of a Subtext in the Work of Campin and His Contemporaries," *Art History* 15 (1992), pp. 1–18.

[26] Falkenburg has also discovered much about the roles of olfaction and other senses in fifteenth-century devotional imagery; see e.g. Reindert Falkenburg, *The Fruit of Devotion: Mysticism and the Imagery of Love in Flemish Paintings of the Virgin and Child, 1450–1550* (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1994).

[27] *Prayers and Portraits*, p. 89.

Fig. 17.6 Ercole de'Roberti, Diptych (separated) with *Adoration of the Shepherds* and (p. 611) the *Dead Christ with Saints Jerome and Francis*, *c.* 1490. 17.8 × 13.5 (left panel); 18 × 13 (right panel), London, National Gallery. Photo: National Gallery, London / Art Resource, NY.

of figures and episodes around the cross at left. The contour of Christ carrying the cross at 10 o'clock continues in the standing figure of Mary and turns the bottom angle in the figures of Jerome, the corpse, and Dominic. John's raised hands and gaze move us toward the distant Lamentation (where the rightmost grieving woman precisely bridges his gaze) and, just beyond it, the Agony in the Garden that launches the narrative. By forming one shape in two entirely different ways,

the painter maps a conceptual dialogue between images that might otherwise appear to have nothing to say to each other. Any viewer complacent about the almost reflexively familiar relational gesture of the diptych format was in this way given a fresh structural prompt to contemplate the course of redemption simultaneously within history and far beyond it.

A third and final piece to consider among these fifteenth-century diptychs was not included in *Prayers and Portraits* because it is not Netherlandish: a work of the early 1490s attributed to Ercole de'Roberti, who was by then working for the Este court at Ferrara. (fig. 17.6) Smaller still (at seven inches tall) than the earlier two, these now separated

panels formed a diptych, probably hinged, for the duchess Eleonora of Aragon (d. 1493).[28] The left side presents a Nativity attended by a single shepherd, with others receiving the angelic news in the distance. The right has the Dead Christ seated on his tomb in the company of two angels, along with a penitent St. Jerome and St. Francis receiving the Stigmata. In the distance Christ is being taken down from the cross. This diptych is therefore like those by Campin and Geertgen not only in its conjunction of Infancy and Passion, but also of two different *kinds* of subjects: the Nativity a standard scene from the life of Christ, and the tableau at the tomb an unconventional, possibly unique subject that reaches across history to accompany the body of Christ with saints transfixed in different ways by his sacrifice.

One major difference is the location of both scenes in patently earthly settings. More, in fact, than just comparable, the two places in the Roberti panels are made one; the hill behind the approaching shepherd on the left rises smoothly into the hill in the right panel, and a more distant hill bridges the gap as well. That physical linkage has a perspectival counterpart in the vessels containing the early and late bodies of Christ: manger and tomb recede inward at corresponding angles, and in doing so accomplish something more than compositional balance. Neither angle alone would suggest particular meaning, but their assertive symmetry imbues each with the presence of the other, like book covers embracing a life (an analogy made explicit by a 1493 inventory description of either this diptych or a similar one in Eleonora's collection as an item "*che se assera a modo de libro.*—that opens like a book")[29] A tomblike manger—the pall of which is heightened by a stiff foreshortening of the Child—was a relatively common idea in late fifteenth-century painting, but this tomb's mirroring

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[28] London, National Gallery (7" × 5" each panel). The most likely original format would have been as a hinged, closeable diptych, as noted by Joseph Manca, *The Art of Ercole de' Roberti* (New York: Cambridge, 1992), pp. 143–145. Manca cites (144) the 1493 inventory of Eleonora's collection, which mentions "una anchoneta che se assera cum uno presepio da un lato et un christo nel sepolcro da l'altro lato" [a small panel that opens with a Nativity on one side and a Christ in the tomb on the other side]. There are traces of red velvet on the reverses of the panels. See also Monica Molteni, *Ercole de'Roberti* (Milan: Amilcare Pizzi, 1995) p. 155; David Jaffe, Luke Syson, Denise Allen, Jennifer Helvey, "Ercole de' Roberti and the Renaissance in Ferrara," *Burlington Magazine* 141 (1999), pp. xxxvi–xxxvii (i–xl).

[29] Manca, p. 144. On the deeper evolution of this relationship, see Laura Gelfand, "The Devotional Portrait Diptych and the Manuscript Tradition," in *Essays in Context: Unfolding the Netherlandish Diptych*, (eds.) John Oliver Hand and Ron Spronk, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 46–59.

Fig. 17.7 Detail of panels in Figure 17.6.

recollection of the manger was unusual. What matters most here is that the idea is achieved in purely situational rather than symbolic terms. It hinges entirely on the implied position of an observer equally between the two panels and between the newborn and sacrificed bodies. We stand centered on neither, while the more head-on projection of the shed amplifies the manger's telling slant.[30]

These relationships deepen when one notices on the right side of the Nativity what may look at first like the shepherd's shadow, but is instead a dark opening in the rocks that has no clear purpose or explanation within the scene.[31] (fig. 17.7) Given the continuity of

[30] The novelty of this effort to plant the observer in the center becomes clearer in light of contemporaneous diptychs that instead station us before one of the two panels, with an angled view of the other. The best example is Memling's 1487 diptych of Maarten van Nieuwenhove (Bruges, Hospitaalmuseum Sint-Janshospitaal). See *Prayers and* Portraits, pp. 178–85. My thanks to Laura Gelfand for calling attention to this comparative point.

[31] Though it might conceivably be associated with the traditional grotto of the Nativity, its marginal placement and small size make this unlikely.

settings, however, it is hard not to see a connection between this cavity opening rightward into the rock and the cave beside the tomb in the right panel, which turns leftward into a darkness that can easily proceed from the opening near the manger.[32] Such a tunnel would create a short corridor between Bethlehem and Calvary.[33] Once seen, it is almost impossible to ignore. It has to be emphasized, though, that however strongly each image presses inward toward a middle passage, this can ultimately be excavated only in an observer's imagination. Together the images propose the idea, but Ercole chose not to paint it. It was left for Eleonora of Aragon and subsequent observers to decide whether there is a true opening between the scenes.

Along with the other works we have seen, this notional passage is evidence that more often than not, it is we who are the middle of diptychs. Each kind of connection I have been describing—be they symbolic, metaphorical, gestural, compositional, temporal, or topographical (to name a few)—invites a particular kind of recognition and investment from the observing individual. In a triptych (think, for example of Campin's *Mérode c.* 1425–30), priorities have been established before we arrive. The center comes first while wings are manifestly adjunct. And in a single-panel image (say, Giorgione's *Tempest c.* 1505), all elements occupy one field, however complex or intriguing their relationships within that field might be; there is no external division to make the picture itself a companion, component, or subordinate of another.

Given the mountains of scholarship dedicated to the *Tempest* and *Mérode triptych* (and countless other triple- and single-field works), it is obvious that diptychs are not alone in demanding sustained and often speculative thought from a serious viewer. What does distinguish many diptychs, however, is their propositional character. It can mean any number of things to place two images side by side. Generations of art history students have, for example, watched untold millions of pairings glow on screens in semi-darkened rooms. And at exam time, more often than not they will have been shown a few more such pairings and asked to write comparative responses. Their teachers recog-

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[32] Among other topographies in Ercole's oeuvre, this low, dark opening near the manger finds its closest counterpart in a tomb entrance appearing by the body of Christ in a Lamentation now in Liverpool. Illustrated in Manca, pl. 14c.

[33] The cave behind Jerome can also evoke simultaneously his own wilderness retreat and Christ's sepulcher, and the hill it occupies appears to proceed seamlessly into Calvary itself.

nize (if not always aloud) the artifice and flexibility of the exercise. If the *Mérode triptych* and *Tempest* were to appear as an exam comparison, it would probably be seeking discussion of symbolic meaning or approaches to it in modern scholarship. But if the *Tempest* were instead put next to Constable's *Haywain* (1821), it becomes a nudge to think beyond the Renaissance and write something about landscape. And if the *Haywain* is replaced by the *Pastoral Symphony* (*c.* 1508) painted in same years as the *Tempest* and possibly by the same artist, it becomes a question about Venetian art, or about connoisseurship, or about new kinds of subject matter for learned collectors. Avenues of thought are rerouted with each new juxtaposition.

At its etymological root, to "compare" is simply to bring together. But that does not capture the brand of mental effort we mean by the term. It might be technically true to say that each of the diptychs considered here is itself a comparison because it puts two things together. But the term is inadequate because similarities and differences are only the beginning of what and how they ask one to ponder. The activity moves inevitably beyond comparison toward the subtler terrain of interpretation, a term whose roots are more telling. The *OED* indicates that the latter half of the word, consisting of "prêt" or "pres," is of uncertain origin; one possibility is a Sanskrit verb meaning "to spread widely" or "spread abroad."[34] More certain is the prefix "inter-", or between. Early noun forms of "interpret" in English and French refer to a translator, explainer, or expounder—one who carries meaning between an origin and a destination. In a very real sense it is betweenness itself that makes sophisticated diptychs what they are. That betweenness is made visible and productive only to one able to occupy and indeed control it from outside the closeable work.

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The scope of this short essay is wide, and overly so if it is thought to claim a single interpretive principle for all diptychs. In search of perspective on that scope itself, it may be useful to conclude with a look toward animations of the form in the work of a painter still among us.

[34] *OED*: a. F. interpréter (13th century in Littré), or immed. ad. L. interpret{amac} r{imac} to explain, expound, translate, understand, also in pass. sense, to be explained, mean, f. interpres, -pret-em an agent, explainer, expounder, translator, dragoman, f. inter between + root corresp. to Skr. prath- to spread abroad.

During the Washington run of *Prayers and Portraits*, a much larger diptych hung nearby in the East Wing of the National Gallery of Art: Jasper Johns's *Perilous Night* of 1982.[35] (fig. 17.8) It is one of the most conceptually and iconographically dense of all Johns paintings—few of which lack density of many kinds. "Perilous Night" is a song composed by John Cage, the score of which is silkscreened near the upper right corner on the right half of the work. There it is surrounded by a variety of objects and representational fragments, including three mottled casts of left arms and hands, a maulstick (attached just within the right edge of the picture), an image of a handkerchief derived from one of Picasso's *Weeping Women*, cross-hatch motifs that surface widely in Johns' own earlier work, and roughly illusionistic wood grain panels. Among these and other layers of reference to the body, self, emotions, and art, an element most germane to our focus nestles near the center of this right half of the work. Near the bottom of a thickly worked rectangle of gray encaustic, an array of textured strokes can be recognized—upon prompting and with great effort—as an adaptation of the contour of a pair of bodies from one of the most dramatic of all Renaissance images: the *Resurrection* panel of Grünewald's Isenheim Altarpiece (Colmar, Musée Unterlinden). The main figure is the backward-falling guard at the tomb. He is a nameless supporting cast member, but compelling for his awkward surrender to gravity in contrast to Christ's weightless rise and for his immediacy as the body closest to an observer before the altarpiece.[36] The second figure adapted by Johns is the guard just beyond him, who is bent forward and only partly visible.

A second specter of the same pair of men visits the left half of *Perilous Night* which, unlike the aggregate effect on the right, is given to what looks like a single field of painting. Impasto grays, white, and black at once echo and differ from those into which the guards on the right are inscribed. Though the muffled quotation on the left is much larger, recognition is doubly challenged by Johns' decision to reverse and invert the broken contour of Grünewald's figures.[37] One pair of

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[35] National Gallery of Art. (67 1/8 × 96 1/8 × 6 1/4 in.) Encaustic on canvas with objects. See an entry on the painting by Jeffrey Weiss at http://www.nga.gov/fcgi-bin/tinfo_f?object=86864and an tour of individual elements and interpretations athttp://www.nga.gov/feature/artnation/johns/index.shtm.

[36] Well illustrated at http://www.nga.gov/feature/artnation/johns/archaeology_4.shtm

[37] http://www.nga.gov/feature/artnation/johns/archaeology_3.shtm.

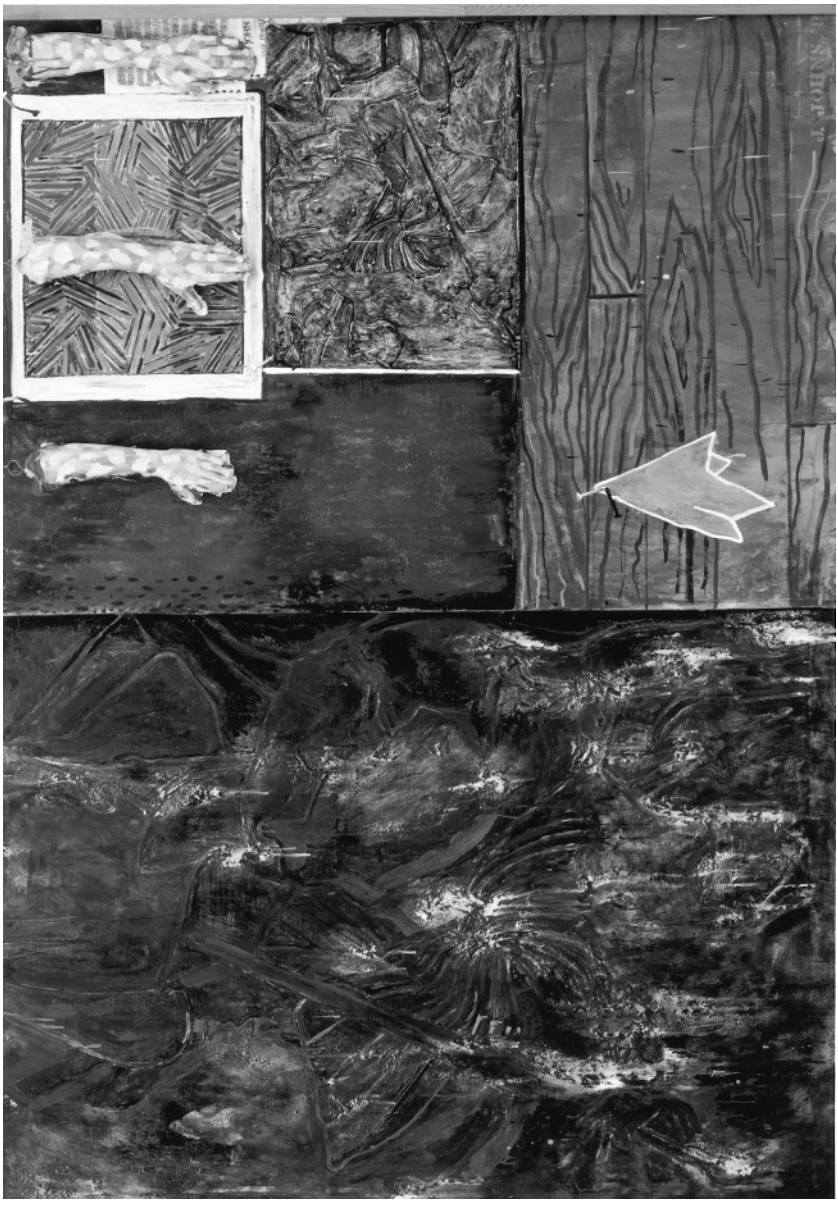

Fig. 17.8 Jasper Johns, *Perilous Night*, 1982, 170.5 × 244.2 × 15.9 Washington, DC, National Gallery of Art, Robert and Jane Meyerhoff Collection. Photo: courtesy of the Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art.

guards is thus smallish, hemmed in, and upright, like a picture among pictures, while the other (and same) pair is upended, open, and expansive—to the point of overreaching the picture field at the upper edge. If one of these afterimages is to be understood as primary and the other its echo or redaction, it is impossible to be sure which is which. But once the guards have been identified, the wood grain and a *trompe l'oeil* nail holding the handkerchief on the right side become fragments of the Crucifixion. The handkerchief, in turn, looks through Picasso to the tears shed under the cross and at the tomb. Dangling arms join this parade of associations, as does "*Perilous Night*"—which can harken beyond Cage's score toward the darkness that came on the world at the time of Christ's death (Matt. 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44).

Guards in images of the Resurrection embody a failure to see. They were present, but not witnesses. As the Gospels recount it, no one saw the Resurrection. When the women reach the tomb what they discover is an absence, not an event. In significant contrast, viewers of Resurrection *images* see the miracle in progress as the body rises. The privilege of that sight is underscored by the collapse and slumber of the guards who share the scene but missed it. Those who choose to look carefully into *Perilous Night* must notice not only how much Johns challenges us to shuttle between left and right, but also his requirement that we do so in the doubled yet disappearing presence of a pair who never saw and never will. Only a body and mind before and between them can begin to put this together.

Johns had produced a diptych two decades earlier, in 1962–63, that shares some of the thoughts behind *Perilous Night*. *Diver* is a seven-foot tall drawing in charcoal, pastel, and watercolor on two pieces of paper mounted on two joined canvases.[38] (fig. 17.9) A light vertical band occupies the center, while the physical seam occurs leftward off-center within this broad axis. Two pairs of hands, one above the equator of the work and one at its bottom, are pressed into the surface, with each pair connected to the other by arms or something like them. This makes it hard to decide how exactly the hands belong together. Do the two upper ones go together as they do on a bilaterally symmetrical body, or does each belong more to its physically contiguous lower

[38] New York, Museum of Modern Art. Charcoal, pastel, and watercolor on paper mounted on canvas, two panels, 7' 2 1/2" × 71 3/4" (219.7 × 182.2 cm) See John Elderfield, "*Diver*: A Delay" in *Jasper Johns: An Allegory of Painting, 1955–1965*, (ed.) Jeffrey Weiss, (Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 2007), pp. 190–205.

Fig. 17.9 Jasper Johns, *Diver*, 1962-63, 219.7 × 182.2, New York, Museum of Modern Art, partial gift of Kate Ganz and Tony Ganz in memory of their parents, Victor and Sally Ganz. Photo: Digital Image, The Museum of Modern Art/Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY. Jasper Johns/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

counterpart? As this unanswered question of pairing, connection, and separation—up and down and left and right—pivots on the cardinal clarity of the human form, it uncovers the stark yet ambivalent sidedness at the heart of *Diver* and so much of Johns' subsequent work.

Along with hands and feet, a few other elements are clearly recognizable, though in separate signifying registers: four dark arrows (two descending from the upper wrists and two at the terminals of the arcs rising from the lower hands) and the stenciled word DIVER at lower left. The arrows are invariably associated with a dive, though questions remain about how. Johns said that the work shows "the idea of a swan dive."[39] The dive is, naturally enough, generally seen as descending toward the bottom of the picture.[40] The upper arrows may suggest the plunge of the body, while the outer arrows may trace or promise the spread of the currently downward hands. The feet make sense at the top of the image, but this does not tell us how to read them in an imagined narrative of action. Are they the soles of a figure whose back faces us while descending through the center? If so, is this undone by the strong impression that they were made by the artist standing on the surface facing away, toward what becomes the top of the picture when it hangs on a wall.[41] One line of questions, teasingly sustained by Johns himself, wonders whether that central band is the diving board, in which case it is not hard to see those feet as the artist himself preparing to dive out of the picture altogether.

Where *Perilous Night* would draw its title from a song, Johns has mentioned, without much explanation, that there is reference to the poet Hart Crane in *Diver*.[42] This has been taken by some to mean that the title refers to Crane's 1932 suicide by drowning in the Gulf of Mexico. Whether or not that demise was formative, the Crucifixion has been adduced here, too. There is the stavelike vertical with arms outstretched on either side. John Elderfield, who has written most incisively about the drawing, suggests that the feet at the top would

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[39] Roberta Bernstein, "Jasper Johns' Paintings and Sculptures, 1954–1974: 'The Changing Focus of the Eye'," (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1975), p. 108 as cited by Elderfield, p. 204 n. 5.

[40] E.g. by Rosalind Krauss, "Split Decision: Jasper Johns in Retrospect. Whole in Two," *Artforum* 35 (September, 1996), p. 80 (78–85).

[41] Elderfield carefully pursues these questions of direction in "Diver: A Delay" (as in n. 35).

[42] Bernstein, p. 109.

mean that this is the Crucifixion of St. Peter.[43] But if the Crucifixion is here, it is Christ's, too, since the conjunction of hands at the bottom forms a skull[44] that inevitably evokes the one at the base of countless Crucifixions on Calvary—a name that (like Golgotha) means "place of the skull." It has not gone unnoticed that Johns made the drawing when he was 33 years old. In later remarks about it he observed that "it has an ambiguous quality that can suggest either life or death."[45] The skull at the base of Crucifixions—like the one on the left side of Geertgen tot sint Jan's diptych (fig. 5)—was often understood as the skull of Adam. No name could be more apt than his in a picture centrally defined by a fall that is in the same moment (or a much later one) reversed by arms outstretched.

One can go much deeper with *Diver*, but the point here as with all of our examples is to step back and regard the nature of the invitation. The apparent bottomlessness of *Diver* is made possible by the insistent colloquy of its sides. The same is true of our earlier diptychs, each of which invents a line between union and distance, likeness and difference, time and simultaneity, and life and death. Neither up nor down nor pausing in between, a dive is pure betweenness. As this one hovers or snaps between motion and its end—perhaps while touching Christ, Hart Crane, the artist, and the viewer—it joins the lineage of *memento mori*. Not all diptychs find their way to the Passion or a meeting of the quick and the dead. But their presence in *Diver* makes it especially moving when one standing before this lifesize drawing realizes that the handprints might just as easily be ours as the artist's. Their interpersonal imprint looks back to the touching with which we began, and the fact that the middle of a diptych is always asking something of us.

[43] Elderfield, p. 201. From this he unrolls a string of ingenious associations (via the Raphael tapestry of the *Miraculous Draught of the Fishes*, where cranes stand in water, etc.) to consider why Peter's sacrifice might make sense for Johns.

[44] "…the hands sealing the base of the drawing have become a skull on the ocean floor." Elderfield, p. 201.

[45] Quoted in the MOMA's press release (15 December, 2003) on acquisition of *Diver*: www.moma.org/about_moma/press/2003/diver.pdf.

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Push Me, Pull You:
Physical and Spatial Interaction in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art

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Push Me, Pull You

Physical and Spatial Interaction in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art

Volume Two

Edited by

Sarah Blick and Laura D. Gelfand

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On the cover: Master of the Figdor Deposition, *The Martyrdom of Saint Lucy, c.* 1505, 132.4 × 101.7 cm, oil on panel, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. Photo by permission.

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These books are dedicated to the memory of our fathers,
Boris Blick and Sidney Gelfand.

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Mosan: Liège et son pays à l'époque romane du XI^e^ au XIII^e^ siècle (2007). She co-edited *The Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage* (Leiden: Brill, 2004) and was Associate Editor of *The Encyclopedia of Medieval Pilgrimage* (Leiden: Brill, 2009). She also serves as executive editor of *Peregrinations: Journal of Medieval Art and Architecture*. She is currently working on a an article entitled "A Vision for the Virtuous: Contemplation of a Reliquary of the Virgin and Child from the Cleveland Museum of Art."

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INTRODUCTION TO VOLUME 2

Scope and Focus of the Volumes

Cooperative interaction is key to the mobility of the Pushmi-pullyu, the fictive creature from which these volumes take their name. In Hugh Lofting's Dr. Doolittle books, the Pushmi-pullyu is described as an antelope with two heads at opposite ends of its body. In order to do anything at all both of the animal's heads must engage in a dialogue and come to a decision. The interdependent nature of this decision making as well as the suggestion of physical and emotional engagement evoked by the animal's name seemed to the editors to nicely reflect our goals in compiling the essays published here.

All devotional objects are designed for some type of interaction with devotees; this interaction can be physical, intellectual, and/or emotional. Artists, patrons, and institutions had a vested interest in producing works of art that inspired those who used them. Given the overwhelmingly interactive nature of devotional art it was something of a challenge for the editors to narrow the scope of these volumes and we did so by including only essays in which devotional interactivity was central to the authors' methodological approach. The objects discussed in these books required specific responses or actions and the essays elucidate the layered relationships that were established between devotional objects and those who interacted with them.

The editors believe that there are three distinct categories into which devotional interaction can be divided: active physical interaction, purely imaginative interaction, and performative interaction. An example of active physical interaction would be a pilgrim who, while visiting a church, would walk around, under, and through the sculpture and architecture of the building containing the sacred goal of his travels. The same individual also had the option of taking an imaginative pilgrimage in which he or she could stay home and use a manuscript to inspire a mental pilgrimage and the emotional response associated with physically visiting a pilgrimage site. Performative pilgrimage could play a role in both active and imaginative pilgrimages, i.e., walking the labyrinth in a pilgrimage church or turning the pages of a devotional book in order to facilitate imagined momentum. In all three types of experiences, the pilgrim physically manipulates an

object or is manipulated by an imaginative story or the physical space of the church. In every example the purpose of these active and imaginative pilgrimages was to achieve salvation.

All large projects must be limited in scope and the essays gathered here focus on European devotional objects from *c.* 1300 to *c.* 1500, created on both sides of the Alps, finding pan-European commonalities in the history of response. Medieval and Renaissance audiences differed significantly from those that preceded and followed them. Fewer individuals typically interacted with earlier devotional objects and these were generally people with training or experience in appropriate responses. During the later medieval period greater numbers of lay individuals came into contact with devotional objects and these volumes examine the responses of these people to show how fourteenth and fifteenth-century viewers experienced these objects in new and divergent ways. The personalization of these responses was dramatically curtailed by the church as part of their reaction to the Reformation beginning in the mid-sixteenth century. Later devotional art exhibits uniformity and the imprimatur of church authority that sometimes limited unique interactions. We see the artwork created in the periods and places covered in these volumes as discrete within its temporal boundaries, yet unlimited in the variety of possible responses.

Reception Theory

Many scholars have examined the notion that the viewer was meant to interact viscerally with devotional works of art, and reception theory (*Rezeptionsgeschichte*) has been used particularly successfully in many recent studies. According to reception theory the "viewer" (or reader) should not be seen as a single individual, but rather a composite of imagined, intended, explicit, implicit, ideal, actual, and archerecipient viewers. This multivalent "viewer" affects how the artwork was commissioned, designed, implemented, and received. This approach allows for a layered understanding of the complexity involved in looking, communicating, and understanding the messages various objects conveyed to their contemporary audiences. Reception theory also cautions the art historian to be aware that they bring their own preconceptions to the work of art they analyze.[1] Studies using this theory

[1] Madeline Caviness, "Reception of Images by Medieval Viewers," in *A Companion to Medieval Art*, ed. Conrad Rudolph (London: Blackwell, 2006), pp. 65–85.

emphasize understanding a variety of readers' or viewers' intentions and that multiple interpretations occurred at the same time or over the course of the centuries.

Beyond this, scholars such as David Freedberg, in the *Power of Images* and John Shearman, in *Only Connect: Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance*,[2] have examined how artwork went beyond basic seeing and brought about intense emotional and physical responses thus engaging the spectator in a profound way. It is in this vein that this volume seeks to explore more specific instances of the demanding art and architecture of the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

Interaction and Devotion

Produced in the context of a centuries-old artistic tradition of Christian art, artists, patrons, and viewers looked for interactions with artwork that reflected new ideas of emotional connection and theatrical presence. Indeed late medieval and Renaissance art was surprisingly pushy. Its architecture demanded that people move through certain passages; its sculptures played elaborate games alternating between concealment and revelation; and its paintings charged viewers with moving visually through two dimensions, recreating long and imaginative journeys. Viewers of this period were meant to push back, interacting with artwork in a performative manner in order to gain insight into religious belief and their own reactions to these demanding works of art. Seeing so many of these objects removed from their original surroundings and placed in the secular context of a museum has promoted the idea that these precious objects were simply looked at, but not touched, fondled, or kissed. However, medieval devotees demanded a physical and imaginative relationship with art, and artists and architects designed their work with this in mind.

Senses and Perception

Implicit in the study of interaction and objects are medieval concepts of the senses and vision and medieval perception has been the focus of much scholarly attention. This is particularly relevant to interactive

[2] David Freedberg, *The Power of Images* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991) and John Shearman, *Only Connect…Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (Washington, D.C.: Princeton University Press, 1992).

art and architecture because artists and patrons had these ideas in mind when creating monuments that were intended to touch people's hearts and minds. Certain senses were continually appealed to in order to make these objects and the experience of them more effective. For example, hearing was the focus of earthenware sound vases that were embedded into walls of churches in an attempt to improve acoustics.[3] This kind of innovation was prompted by the notion that sound was important because it was comprehended not only by the ear but also by the "inner sense of the soul."[4] Sound was seen as a form of harmony, interacting with other sounds and our hearing, but also with movement, and this harmonic movement was reflected in the mathematical movement of celestial objects such as planets.

Smell also factored into the animation of the worship experience, as in the example of herbs and fragrant flowers picked that morning by congregants who carried them in procession on the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin.[5] The official reason for the good-smelling produce was to recall the fragrance said to have lingered in the Virgin's empty tomb, but they were also used for magical purposes.[6] Barking Abbey scattered different flowers in sequence on Pentecost[7] and frankincense and "pepper" were used to scent the parish churches at Bramley, Hampshire and Stoke Charity, respectively.[8]

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[3] Following Roman theories of acoustics in theaters, the vases reduced reverberation in closed rooms. The vases absorb some of the sound energy and then it radiates the sound at the resonance frequency. They were inserted into the walls and covered with a wooden peg, typically they flanked window opening and adorned the curves of ceilings.

[4] Johannes Scotus Erigina, *De divisione naturae, PL* 122, *c.* 965 as cited in Władysław Tatarkiewicz, J. Harrell, Cyril Barrett, D. Petsch, *History of Aesthetics, ed.* C. Barrett (The Hague, Mouton, 1970–1974), pp. 124–26, esp. p. 126.

[5] They were then blessed in the church and were used to protect barns, houses, people, livestock, and prevent bad weather. They were also placed in fields, behind cattle stalls, and thrown into hearth fires. They were also used as medicine for sick cattle, placed in the beds of infants, and slipped under pillows to keep witches away. R.W. Scribner, *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1987), pp. 32–33.

[6] Scribner, p. 33.

[7] Anne Bagnall Yardley, *Performing Piety: Musical Culture in Medieval English Nunneries* (New York: Palgrave, 2006), p. 71.

[8] Simon Roffey, "Devotional Objects and Cultural Context: The Medieval Parish Church" in (ed.) Virginia Raguin, *Catholic Collecting: Catholic Reflection 1538–1850, Objects as a Measure of Reflection on a Catholic Past and the Construction of Recusant Identity in England and America* (Worcester, MA: College of the Holy Cross, 2006), p. 26 according to their churchwardens' accounts.

Other blessings were transmitted through touch, as seen in the practice of placing objects under the altar while the Mass was celebrated, granting them a healing power. The altar cloth and corporal were also believed to have the power to heal when touched to the afflicted, especially epileptics. Priests placed the corporal on the faces of the congregation and they would dip their fingers in the water and wine in the chalice and then stroke the eyes and mouths of children and old women to protect them from evil.[9]

While other senses were clearly involved, sight was the sense most often at the heart of interactive devotional practices. The actual experience of seeing was considered interactive as many people believed that an object under observation emitted a light that was perceived by the viewer, who returned the visual ray to the object.[10] Sight was especially prized for its role in revealing truths: St. John of Damascus (*c.* 676–749) wrote that "…the word appeals to the hearing, the image appeals to sight; it conveys understanding…the image was devised to guide us to knowledge and to make manifest and open what is hidden, certainly for our profit and well-doing and salvation…".[11] Theologian Thomas Bradwardine (*c.* 1290–1349) focused on images, noting that either real or inspired by words, they should be vivid in order to impress themselves on the memory of the worshiper.[12] Prayers were written with close-up views in mind, noting different details, asking viewers to add details not seen, stretching their imagination, but also relying on the realism portrayed in the image.[13] Artists responded to this intensity by making evident things and even abstract concepts that were previously hidden from view. For example, in the high and later Middle Ages, body-part reliquaries that once hid their sacred contents behind glittering metal, now displayed "the Real Presence" through

[9] Scribner, p. 36; A. Franz, *Die Messe im deutschen Mittelalter* (Freiburg, 1902), pp. 87–92, 96–97, 107–13.

[10] David Chidester, *Word and Light: Seeing, Hearing, and Religious Discourse* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), pp. 1–24.

[11] Richard Marks, *Image and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2004), p. 17; A. Louth (transl.), *St. John of Damascus, Three Treatises on the Divine Images* (New York, 2003), p. 29.

[12] Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 281–88, esp. 284.

[13] Hans Belting, *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages: Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion*, translated by Mark Bartusis and Raymond Meyer (New Rochelle, NY: Aristide D. Caratzas Publisher, 1990), p. 62.

rock crystal.[14] Painters and sculptors, too, sought to make clear what was once meant to be only imagined, as seen in images of the pregnant Virgin and St. Elizabeth on whose stomachs were shown the fetuses of Christ and John the Baptist (in appropriate un-fetus-like stances).[15]

Of course, beyond actual sensual perception lay a wish to also experience things that could only be understood through faith: to see the inner realities of our bafflingly physical world and to achieve intimacy with the divine without mediation.[16] Development of these senses helped one detect hidden meanings, beauty, and invisible truths and most theological accounts subdivided the physical from the spiritual senses.[17] But sometimes people liked to be tricked, to be struck with awe at the angels who appeared to sing from the façade of Wells Cathedral (actually choir boys standing on platforms behind the statues) or when jugglers used illusion to make viewers think that their heads had been cut off and placed on a platter in an allusion to John the Baptist.[18]

Performative Space and Performative Objects in Churches

Performances that stimulated the senses were believed to bring greater understanding to the devotee, helping them grasp complicated theo-

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[14] Marie-Madeline Gauthier, *Highways of the Faith: Relics and Reliquaries from Jerusalem to Compostela*, trans. J.A. Underwood (Seacaucus, NJ: The Wellfleet Press, 1983), pp. 128–130. See, for example, *The Visitation, c.* 1310, attrib. Master Heinrich of Constance, Germany, in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, *Icon of the Virgin with Child in a Reliquary Frame*, 1350, Siena, Italy, attrib. to Naddo Ceccarelli in The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, and *Reliquary of Charlemagne's Forearm*, 1481, Germany, in Aachen Cathedral Treasury.

[15] See, for example. *The Pregnant Virgin at the Spindle*, Bohemia, *c.* 1390 in the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemaldgalerie and *Visitation of Mary and Elizabeth*, Passau, Germany, *c.* 1410, in the Germanisches National-museum, Nuremberg, and the Visitation.

[16] Karl Rahner, "The Doctrine of the 'Spiritual Senses' in the Middle Ages," in *Theological Investigations: Experience of the Spirit, Source of Theology*, trans. David Morland, vol. 16 (New York: Crossroad, 1983), pp. 104–34.

[17] Margaret R. Miles, "Vision: The Eye of the Body and the Eye of the Mind in Augustine's *De Trinitate* and Other Works, *Journal of Religion* (April 1983), pp. 125–42; Ann W. Astell, *Eating Beauty: The Eucharist and the Spiritual Arts of the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 4.

[18] Bruno Roy, "The Household Encyclopedia as Magic Kit: Medieval Popular Interest in Pranks and Illusions," *Journal of Popular Culture* vol. 14 (1980), pp. 60–69, esp. 63–64. Reginald Scot, *The Discoverie of Witchcraft* (1584) in (ed.) John Rodker (Bungay, 1930), p. 198.

logical ideas and intricate stories.[19] For example, since there was no expectation that the laity understood the Latin Mass, the clergy debated how they ought to engage congregants, and their solution was the institution of liturgical performance.[20] Because of this medieval parishioners saw the church as a performative space, not just for the Mass (though that was its most important function), but for processions, celebrations, and reenactments—all meant to make the word of God more palpable, more understandable.

Movement and performance inside and outside of the church regularly included all parishioners which helped to construct a sense of community identity and a connection with the sacred drama. Processions moved crowds through the church (allowing the laity access to parts of the church normally closed off to them) and outside through the village or city,[21] and were punctuated by symbolic breaks during which blessings were uttered and sermons chanted. Everyone assumed part of the communal identity, whether watching or marching. As processions were undertaken to help with crops, as part of civic festivals and religious holidays, or funerals, they were an essential part of quotidian life.[22] Civic processions going one way through a city might be met by others (civic and ecclesiastical) creating a symbolic dialogue that engaged the urban fabric.[23] Processions were marked by a synesthesia of images, sounds, smells, and movement,[24] and a riot of color as clergy and laity carried banners, reliquaries, and wore sumptuous costumes.

Outside of processions church spaces were opened or closed and interaction with artwork varied as the liturgical year progressed. During Lent objects such as retables were ritually closed off and veils or large cloths were hung, blanketing images, allowing the congregation to see only the feet of the celebrant behind the curtain.[25] The cloths cloaked various parts of the church until Ash Wednesday, when the passage regarding the rending of the veil in the Temple at Jerusalem was read,

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[19] Katherine Zieman, *Singing the New Song: Literacy and Liturgy in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), p. 138.

[20] *ibid*.

[21] Kathleen Ashley and Wim Hüsken, eds., *Moving Subjects: Processional Performance in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 2001), p. 10.

[22] Ashley and Hüsken, pp. 8–9.

[23] Ashley and Hüsken, pp. 11, 15.

[24] Ashley and Hüsken, p. 13.

[25] Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England, c. 1400–c. 1580* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 29.

and, at that moment, the cloth over the high altar was dropped or torn away. In Essen, when the words from "They divided my garments among them" were chanted, two canons took the altar cloth and tore it down the middle.[26] The veiling and unveiling continued on Good Friday, when a cross was covered and uncovered three times as priests sang "Behold the wood of the cross" as they lifted the cross higher and higher each time, as if the crucifix and Christ were rising upward into the space of the church.[27] The laity then crawled towards the cross, barefoot and on their knees (or "creeping to the cross"), so they could kiss the foot of the cross.[28]

Adding to the drama, sculptures of Christ, which normally stood above altars were often taken down, washed and "buried" in coffins or draped with linens in preparation for Lent and the enactment of the Easter resurrection. Some sculptures of Christ had movable limbs in order to allow them to be taken from the cross where they were usually hung and placed on a grave on Good Friday and taken up again on Sunday.[29] Life-sized holy graves, made of wood or stone, painted or plain, became popular in the late thirteenth century, with life-size figures of Christ in a coffin surrounded by other figures.[30] The palpability of Christ's death was engaged further by coffins with hinged lids with scenes of Christ's passion painted on the inside and therefore visible only when the coffin was open. One such coffin from the Cistercian convent of Wienhausen in Germany features a late thirteenth century figure in a mid-fifteenth century coffin. To fully engage the viewers, small doors are placed at each end of the coffin and when open allowed the devotee to touch or kiss the head and feet of Christ.[31]

The changing effects of the images were made stronger by the consistent interaction with architecture, again following the liturgical year.

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[26] John XIX. 24. Scribner, p. 24; K. Robbeck, *Geschichte der Stadt Essen* (Essen, 1915), vol. 1, p. 67.

[27] Virginia Raguin, "Narrative Altarpieces, Painted and Carved" in (ed.) Virginia Raguin, *Catholic Collecting: Catholic Reflection 1538–1850, Objects as a Measure of Reflection on a Catholic Past and the Construction of Recusant Identity in England and America* (Worcester, MA: College of the Holy Cross, 2006), p. 44.

[28] Raguin, "Narrative Altarpieces," p. 44; Duffy, *Stripping the Altars*, p. 29.

[29] Grinder-Hansen, p. 233 these were often devotional figures as well. See Ulla Haastrup, "Medieval Props in the Litugical Drama," *Hafnia*, 11 (1987), pp. 130–70 and Barnaby Googe translation of Kirchmayr's *Regnum Papisticum* in *The Popish Kingdome or, Reign of Antichrist, written in Latin verse*, fol. 53.

[30] Grinder-Hansen, p. 235.

[31] Grinder-Hansen, p. 236.

At Pentecost, the ceiling holes were used to dramatize the spiritual awakening. Some filled their churches with smoky incense,[32] while others visualized the speaking in tongues in the form of a censer (often in the form of a dove), suspended from the ceiling, swinging an immense arc through the sanctuary.[33] Records also tell of people in the nave below being showered with host wafers, water, and even almonds.[34] On the day commemorating the Ascension, some churches displayed a sculpture of Christ seated on a rainbow (sometimes accompanied by the Holy Spirit and angels) that was raised up through a hole in the church ceiling; once safely out of sight, a puppet with the image of Satan was ritualistically thrown into a hole in the church floor to the accompanying din of noisy rattles and clappers.[35]

Puppets weren't the only participants; both clergy and laity (when appropriate) used the church space to create sacred theatrical spectacles. In the collegiate church at Essen, the *Visitatio Sepulchri* play featured a shrine chest put in a tent near the west end of the church. Two canons (dressed as angels) flanked the shrine and three canonesses stood on the south side (playing the Three Mary's), while another two canons raced to the altar, playing Peter and John.[36] Dramatic reenactments of the *Harrowing of Hell* commonly used the doors of the church as props for dramatic effect. In Mainz[37] a priest holding the crucifix struck the church door three times while singing an antiphon; at the monastery of St. Gall, this caused the door to open.[38] In the *Depositio* at Bamberg,[39] a procession approached the first portal of the

[32] Edward Atchley, *A History of the Use of Incense in Divine Worship* (London: Longmens, 1909), p. 303.

[33] William Lambarde described the event in St. Paul's Cathedral in the sixteenth century in *Dictionarium Angliae Topographicum et Historicum: An Alphabetical Description of the Chief Places in England and Wales* (London, printed 1730), p. 459.

[34] Davidson, p. 43; (ed.) Googe , Thomas Kirchmayr, *Regnum Papisticum* in *The Popish Kingdome or, Reign of Antichrist, written in Latin verse* (New York: Johnson Reprint Company, 1972), fol, 53.

[35] Scribner, p. xxvi, 27–28, n. 43; C. Hegel (ed.), *Die Chroniken der deutschen Städte vom 14. Bis 16. Jht: Augsburg* (Leipzig, 1894), vol. Iv, p. 341.

[36] Young, p. 335; Essen, Münsterarchiv, MS sine sig., Ordin. Assindense saec. xiv, pp. 80–83.

[37] Rome, Bibl. Vatic., MS Palat. Lat. 448, Rituale-Agendum Moguntinum saec. Xv, fol. 63r–63v.; Karl Young, The Drama of the Medieval Church (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933), vol. I, pp. 161–62.

[38] St. Gall, Stiftsbibl., MS 448, Ordin. Sangallense saec. XV, p. 105; Young, pp. 163–64.

[39] Agenda Bambergensia (Ingolstadt, 1587), pp. 489–90; Young, pp. 176, 564–65.

church and struck the door three times singing "Tollite portas," while a priest within answering as Satan responded "Quis est iste rex gloriae." The crowd outside retorted "Dominus fortis," but the door remained closed; then onto the second and third portal where the exchange was repeated. Finally the third door opened and the procession marched through to witness the Elevation of the Host. Rubrics of plays suggested that processions stop at certain points in the church, such as the west door of the nave, into the choir, or near the baptismal font.[40]

When need be, temporary architecture was introduced including a *praesepe* (or grotto), such as that used in a Nativity play in Padua.[41] This structure also appeared in Rouen and was placed behind the main altar with effigies of the Virgin and Child. Five boys dressed as shepherds entered from the west door of the choir while another boy placed under the vaulting appeared as an angel announcing the Nativity.[42] By the fourteenth century, *praesepes* become the central prop in public and private devotions as did Christmas cribs and public mangers with figures.[43] At Sens, an ass was brought into the church when celebrations of the flight into Egypt took place. The priest brayed three times and the congregation answered in turn.[44]

Both permanent and temporary architecture were installed for Easter celebrations that featured a boy "prophet" who stood on a high place in the church (reflecting the Entry into Jerusalem), pointing to the sacrament and singing. At Long Melford parish church in Suffolk, England, a special turret on the exterior by the door of the Clopton Chapel was added for the boy to sing.[45] At Salisbury Cathedral in England, boys stood on a platform and sang *Gloria laus et honor* and threw down flowers and cakes on the waiting throng below.[46] Rood

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[40] Young, pp. 456–57; Rouen Cathedral Vespers of Easter Monday from the fourteenth century.

[41] Young, p. 10.

[42] Young, vol. II, p. 19.

[43] Young, vol. II, p. 28.

[44] J.G. Davies, *The Secular Use of Church Buildings* (London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1968), p. 82.

[45] Clifford Davidson, *Festivals and Plays in Late Medieval Britain* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), p. 24; Clifford Davidson, *Illustrations of the Stage and Acting to 1580* (Kalamazoo, MI: EDAM Monograph Series 16, 1991), pp. 15–16, fig. 18.

[46] Davidson, *Illustrations*, p. 24; John Walton Tyrer, *Historical Survey of Holy Week: Its Services and Ceremonial* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), p. 58; Christopher Wordsworth, *Ceremonies and Processions of the Cathedral Church of Salisbury* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1901), pp. 67–68.

screens were also commandeered for performances, augmenting its usual function where a priest would climb up to a platform and read the epistle, preach, or lead antiphonal responses.[47]

Outside of special liturgical days, the churches and their objects were displayed and used with drama in mind. Shrines were revealed by pulleys and enormously high covers of baptismal fonts were lifted up by ropes (at Ufford and Hepworth in Suffolk, England),[48] and the surviving carved wooden dragon in York Minster, England performed the same thing.

Performativity in Private Spaces

Similar drama and stimulated senses were also found in private spaces, again allowing the devotee to grasp complicated theological ideas and intricate stories, but with the extra understanding created by performativity of their own choosing. Participation of the laity in private devotion grew apace in the high and later Middle Ages, especially with the edicts of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215).[49] Such devotion was "inspired in part by the preaching and devotional regime of the Franciscans, and partly by a growing hunger for religious variety and intensity on the part of lay men and women with time, leisure, and not least, money on their hands."[50]

Increased prosperity, literacy, and self-consciousness of the middle class resulted in a greater demand for devotional works and manuscript

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[47] Alain Erlande-Brandenburg, *The Cathedral: the Social and Architectural Dynamics of Construction* (transl. Martin Thom) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 277.

[48] Virginia Raguin and Naomi Reed Kline, "Relics and the Two Thomases: Thomas of Canterbury and Thomas of Hereford as Bishop Martyr and Bishop Confessor" in (ed.) Virginia Raguin, *Catholic Collecting: Catholic Reflection 1538–1850, Objects as a Measure of Reflection on a Catholic Past and the Construction of Recusant Identity in England and America* (Worcester, MA: College of the Holy Cross, 2006), p. 70; H. Munro Cautley, *Suffolk Churches* (Suffolk Historic Churches Trust, 1937, reprinted 1982), pp. 77–79, 85–87.

[49] Richard Marks, *Image and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2004), p. 55. New devotions focusing on the Virgin Mary in both private and public settings (e.g. the Joys of Mary) and psalters, books of hours, etc., encouraged this.

[50] Eamon Duffy, *Marking the Hours: English People & their Prayers 1240–1570* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 63.

workshops and later printers created books and images in response. [51] Many of these works were written in the vernacular, not in opposition to the Latin Mass, but rather to accommodate a new kind of intellectual engagement with the written word.[52] With growing literacy readers wished for more images to adorn the text because they inspired different feelings than pure text,[53] helping one experience "actual attention" filled with feeling towards the divine.[54] By the fifteenth century, rubrics in private prayer books urge readers to meditate on an image;[55] and texts advocated contemplative reading and prayer rather than just recitation.[56] For example, the *Zardino de Oration* (1454) encourages the devotee to make use of their inner vision, imagining the Stations of the Cross, "Move slowly from episode to episode, meditate on each one, dwelling on each single stage and step of the story."[57] Indeed, the texts encouraged devotees to break from the narrative sequence, using the instances instead for contemplation.[58] With visual images, one could look at them and read them from any direction even texts placed in images were sometimes freed from their usual horizontal placement, often placed throughout the work to draw attention to certain themes. People read, looked, and listened to images and texts. Some books were designed with both the literate and illiterate in mind: with text and multiple illustrations.[59]

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[51] Rev. Robert A. Horsfield, "The Pomander of Prayer: Apsects of Late Medieval English Carthusian Spirituality and its Lay Audience" in *De Cella in Seculum: Religious and Secular Life and Devotion in Late Medieval England*, (ed.) Michael G. Sargent (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 1989), p. 208.

[52] Zieman, pp. 110–11. Even rote Latin prayers were not worthless, but part of one's identity as a worshiper saying sacred words, helping them engage in affective piety, Zieman, p. 121.

[53] Kathleen Kamerick, *Popular Piety and Art in the Late Middle Ages: Image Worship and Idolatry in England 1350–1500* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), p. 192.

[54] Zieman, pp. 125–26; Jean Gerson, *Oevres completes*, ed. Mgr. Glorieux (Paris: Desclée, 1961), vol. 2, pp. 184–85. Gerson uses an example of asking a peasant to recite the Lord's Prayer without letting his mind wander—he cannot. Therefore he stipulates that one needs more than intention of attention, it needs to have concrete focus.

[55] Sixten Ringbom, *Icon to Narrative: The Rise of the Dramatic Close-up in Fifteenth-Century Devotional Painting* (Abo: Abo Akademi, 1965), p. 22.

[56] David A. Hinton, *Gold and Gilt, Pots and Pins: Possessions and People in Medieval Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 259.

[57] Hans Belting, *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages: Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion*, translated by Mark Bartusis and Raymond Meyer (New Rochelle, NY: Aristide D. Caratzas Publisher, 1990), p. 47.

[58] Belting, *The Image and Its Public*, p. 48.

[59] Scribner, p. 3.

Yet being literate was not enough. For private devotional reading, one needed a "sustained reverie" to make use of the text and images. This meant reading slowly, as a prayer, so that one could "masticate" the text.[60] To help one meditate, most needed images, with devotional manuals recommending "lyttel books in the whiche is conteyned pictures of the articles of lyfe and passion of our Lore Jesu."[61] What was emphasized was the meticulous visualization of places and times described in the Bible, so that privacy was found not only in one's own room, but also in one's own mind. St. Catherine of Siena (1347–1380) directed devotees to "Make yourself a cell in your own mind from which you need never come out."[62]

And these "cells" were distinct from one another. This individualization was echoed by owners of prayers books, which testified to their role as the focus of much personal devotion. Prints and miniatures, sent by friends or gathered by the devotee on their travels (pilgrim badges), were tipped in. Lovely textiles were sewn above special images so that they had to be carefully lifted to gaze upon the picture below. Sometimes readers added their own images to books and interacted with the text by adding their own marginalia and symbols. For example, Robert Grosseteste (1175–1253), Bishop of Lincoln, used over four hundred symbols to classify theological notions in his prayer book,[63] but simpler notations were much more common, especially the *manicule* or small pointing hand (some crude, others immaculately

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[60] Andrew Taylor, "Into his Secret Chamber: Reading and Privacy in Late Medieval England" in *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*, eds. James Raven, Helen Small, Naomi Tadmor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 43; Jean Leclerq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God*, transl. Catherine Misrahi (New York, 1961), pp. 18–22, 89–93.

[61] Thomas Becon, *The Pomander of Prayer* (1531) Manchester, John Rylands Library; Robert A. Horfield, "*The Pomander of Prayer*: Aspects of Late Medieval Carthusian Spirituality and Its Lay Audience," in *De Cella in seculum: Religious and Secular Life and Devotion in Late Medieval England*, (ed.) Michael Sargent (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 212; Taylor, p. 44.

[62] Raymond of Capua, *The Life of St. Catherine of Sienna*, trans. George Lamb (London: P.J. Kenedy & Sons, 1961), p. 71, see also Diana M. Webb, "Women and Home: The Domestic Setting of Late Medieval Spirituality" in *Women in the Church: Papers Read at the 1989 Summer Meeting and the 1990 Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, eds. W.J. Sheild and Diana Wood (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 159–73.

[63] William H. Sherman, *Used Books: Marking Readers in Renaissance England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), pp. 25–26; R.W. Hunt, "Manuscripts Containing the Indexing Symbols of Robert Grosseteste," *Bodelian Library Record* 4/5 (September, 1953), p. 242.

drawn), as well as asterisks, trefoils, checks (ticks), crosses, brackets, small commentaries, and *nota benes*.[64] Others wrote in other prayers, hymns, and charms in their books, such as salves for gout (flyleaves were the site of many medical recipes).[65]

Images of saints in prayerbooks brought them into the domestic sphere and "saints came to play roles more closely related to the everyday concerns of the faithful. They acted as their personal intercessors and helpers, in return for which, through their images, they received prayers and offerings."[66] Private ownership of images was not new to the later Middle Ages, but it was more widespread.[67] Much earlier, St. Gregory (*c*. 540–604) recommended the daily veneration of an image in order to make the invisible, visible and to increase emotions in the worshiper.[68] Yet by the twelfth century instances of private images functioning in miracle stories increased tremendously.[69] Images were also believed to inspire certain thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors. Giovanni Domenici (1356–1419) recommended that mothers have Biblical pictures and sculptures in their homes to teach their children, especially of the Virgin, the baby Jesus playing, and St. John the Baptist. Images of female saints were believed to teach such qualities as charity, purity, and chastity.[70] There were, of course, obvious differences between public and private art. Their naturally smaller size was significant because the image could be nailed to a wall, or placed in a niche that was sepa-

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[64] Sherman, p. 29.

[65] Taylor, p. 60, n. 55.

[66] Marks, p. 86; Andre Vauchez, *Sainthood*, p. 476.

[67] Circumstantial evidence in a letter of St. Gregory, *Ep*. IX: 52 (*P.L.*, 77 cols. 990 f.) talks of using an image to recall God and delights the mind with the images it recalls. There are also references to isolated panel images in Byzantium. Ringbom, pp. 13–14.

[68] Ringbom, p. 19. Virginia Raguin, "Veneration of the True Cross, the Holy Rood of Bromholm, and the Passion of Christ" in *Catholic Collecting: Catholic Reflection 1538–1850, Objects as a Measure of Reflection on a Catholic Past and the Construction of Recusant Identity in England and America*, ed. Virginia Raguin, (Worcester, MA: College of the Holy Cross, 2006), pp. 118–19, 123–24. Tempera and ink on vellum measuring 74 1/4 × 4 3/4 inches (188.5 x 12 cm), late 14th century, now in Stonyhurst College, Lancashire. See R.H. Robbins, "The Arma Christi Rolls," *Modern Language Review* 34 (1939), pp. 415–21.

[69] Ringbom, p. 14.

[70] Nirit Ben-Aryeh Debby, "The Preacher as Goldsmith: The Italian Preachers Use of the Visual Arts" in *Preacher, Sermon and Audience in the Middle Ages*, (ed.) Carolyn Muessig (Leiden: Brill Academic Press, 2002), p. 129; Creighton Gilbert, *Italian Art, 1400–1500: Sources and Documents* (Englewood, NJ, 1980), pp. 145–46.

rated from the room with a curtain, or on a domestic altar.[71] The private focus was facilitated by the invention of the fireplace with a flue and chimney stack in the thirteenth century meant that small rooms could be kept warm and well-lit without smoke.[72]

While private, personal images challenged the hegemony of the cult image, they also buttressed the power of the public image because people wanted their own version of specific and/or miraculous images.[73] Medieval devotees believed that their private images had the same capacity for the miraculous as did the public images, but they wanted the miracle to occur sooner rather than later, and they demanded images that would help spur this miraculous interaction. It did not matter where the image was venerated. Bishop Reginald Pecock (*c*. 1395–1460) wrote that they could be worshiped "before a bare wall in a church, or in a corner of a church or of another house, or in the field."[74] This is because the image was no longer distant from worshiper, yet interacted with them; even speaking to them privately, unlike a public image which was far less personally accessible.[75]

Contents of the Physical Volume

The essays in this volume consider medieval devotional objects and sites that offered physical forms of engagement and interaction. This could be direct touching or movement around or through objects and spaces. The interactions with which the authors deal of this volume deal are varied, but each involves a specific call and response between the objects and the devotees that goes beyond the simple act of looking to something far more involved and haptic at its core. The objects,

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[71] Ringbom, p. 38, 53; M. Heyne, *Fünf Bücher deutscher Hausaltertümter, I, Das deutsche Wohnungswesen von den ältesten geschichtlichen Zeiten bis zum 16. Jahrhundert* (Leipzig, 1899), p. 271, fig. 70; A. Schultz, *Deutsches Leben im XIV. und XV. Jahrhundert* (Vienna, 1892), p. 106.

[72] Taylor, p. 42. See also LeRoy Dresbeck, "The Chimney and Social Change in Medieval England" Albion*: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 3/1 (1971), pp. 21–32.

[73] Belting, *Likeness*, p. 410.

[74] English modernized. (ed.) C. Babington , *The Repossor of Over Much Blaming of the Clergy by Reginald Pecock, D.D.* (London: Rolls Series, 1860), vol. 1, p. 169.

[75] Belting, *Likeness*, p. 410.

places and interactions discussed here engage the physical and for most, they do not function successfully without this engagement.

Manipulating Objects, Manipulative Objects

Many types of devotional objects were intrinsically interactive. Their success as objects was dependent on their ability to provoke a response that was physically engaging and these objects were really only fully functioning when they are being physically interacted with by their owners or others who used them. Public and private devotional objects could, and often did, require very different responses, yet what the objects and places discussed in this volume share is their common interest in the physical nature of devotional practice. The clergy acted as paradigms, modeling for the devout the ideal physically engaged devotional experience, and the essays in this section describe interactions that begin with a major public monument and a public celebration of the conclusion of a successful pilgrimage. The section ends with the study of small sculptures of the Christ child that were kept in small cradles. Meant to be held in the hands of a single individual where it could be prayed to and touched lovingly. At the heart of this kind of interaction is the facilitation and personalization ritual experiences within what may otherwise have been widespread popular devotional experiences. Those who participated in the ritual practices described here were those seeking a more intimate sacred engagement. For example, Kathleen Ashley's essay explores how spontaneous actions developed by individual pilgrims became institutionalized eventually becoming a part of church-sanctioned ritual. The malleability of these pilgrimage rituals and what the author terms "improvisation" in individual approaches to the sacred become clear through this analysis. Sarah Blick examines the votive gifts given to the shrine and tomb of St. Thomas Becket studying how these interactive objects helped viewers establish a relationship with the saint. The reciprocity of gift giving and receiving as well as the nature of display and conspicuous consumption are also discussed. The use of jésueaux by nuns and beguines is the subject of Annette LeZotte's essay. The ways in which these religious women made devotional use of these remarkable objects and the meaning of the objects themselves is studies within the context of late-medieval female devotional practices.

Insistent Images and Spaces

Images in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance became so real that viewers, for whom experiences with images would have been far more unusual and thus profound than they are for us today, would have felt themselves to be directly involved with the sculptures and spaces in which they moved. In these visually intense environments the sculptures around which they moved could seem to speak or interact in ways that were more real than those of the actual people around them. The fervent desire to see and to feel the stories surrounding Christ's life and death created a desire that was answered by artists who created ever more naturalistic imagery and settings in which to place them. The ways in which places and figures imitated originals and how this then altered their very substances, in essence making them into sacred forms or relics of some sort, is essential to each of the essays in this section. Ideas of simulacra, copying, and imitation enter into each of these discussions. Laura Gelfand looks at three sites built during the beginning the middle and the end of the fifteenth century and traces how the artists working there move toward illusionism in the service not of intellectual ideals but in order to create the most intimate possible emotional engagement. Lex Hermans examines stories about speaking statuary that abound in Italian Renaissance literature seeing in these narratives more than simply *topoi*, but rather statements about the interactive nature of sculpture and the desire by viewers and artists to actually speak to the sculptures that peopled their daily lives. Then, Fredrika Jacobs analyzes medieval doctrine concerning sanctioned and superstitious uses of images and then explores examples of the non-canonical practices, including exorcisms at Marian shrines. The power of images to affect the lives of the devout becomes particularly clear thanks to her study.

Revealing and concealing

This section investigates cult sites and images in which a "valuable" commodity is controlled and access to it is parceled out in order to enhance the perception of its power and to guide devotees to a more emotional experience at a prescribed time. Control may be exercised by the clergy or by the individual but in all cases it results in the objects becoming more precious and valuable. The anticipation of finally seeing

or gaining access to the restricted thrills the viewer. Sometimes what is revealed is shocking and provocative, meant to make the viewer think long and hard on complicated subjects. Viola Belghaus studies the cult of Elizabeth of Thuringia in Marburg, examining how the development and promotion of this sacred site influenced the reception and veneration of the saint herself is investigated. It is apparent that the development of the saint's relics into a treasury and the formation of a hagiographic iconography were fundamental to the development and promotion of her cult. Elina Gertsman studies interaction with shrine Madonnas, or *Vierge Ouvrantes*, seeing this as an example of a type of imaginary pilgrimage that was very popular during the Middle Ages. These imaginative pilgrimages begin with the sculptures themselves but with the goal of accessing the Virgin's womb and the scenes depicted within in order to attain spiritual salvation. Suzanne Karr Schmidt examines interactive memento mori images: these include boxwood caskets with ivory corpses, interactive prints with flaps or rosary beads carved in the shape of skulls. The author connects the physical manipulation of these objects with the widespread medieval desire to anticipate and achieve a good death.

Painting, Spectacle and Performativity

How artists controlled perception forcing particular audiences to read their images univalently or multivalently. Perceptions and readings catered to diverse audiences working for highly educated viewers as well as those who were ignorant of the layered implications of many hagiographic stories. For example, visitors to Giotto's Arena Chapel were encouraged to circumambulate the chapel's interior three times in order to "read" the stories of Christ and Mary that were painted on its walls. Through such movement they were able to read the comic book-like layout of the stories while physically engaging with the space through their ritualistic movement. Diptychs and triptychs are also inherently connected to movement since the viewer is engaged with the painting through the opening and closing of their wings. In fact, complete understanding of a polyptych's program only happens through witnessing the movement of its panels and study of the scenes thereby revealed. Finally, such performances needed proper backdrops, these could be found in festival architecture, parade floats, costumes and props found in public celebrations undergirded by devotional

memes were laced with political symbolism Michelle Erhardt examines the Trecento frescoes and paintings in the sacristy of Santa Croce in Florence. Erhardt finds that the artwork set the stage for the mass, providing devotional images for contemplation and leading to appropriately thoughtful mental states for the Franciscan celebrants. Using reception theory Jane Long investigates the ways in which parallelism functions to foster greater viewer interaction in Giotto's works in Santa Croce for a variety of audiences. Rather than seeing these as univalent comparisons in which only a single idea is to be drawn, Giotto's work invites an active type of viewing that allows spectators to take with them more nuanced and layered interpretations of the narrative scenes. On a smaller scale, the authors, Mark Tucker and Lloyd De Witt re-contextualize the Toledo Museum of Art's *Morrison Triptych* establishing the original location of the painting and how its remarkable perspectival arrangement created a convincing illusion in its original location. In the final essay of this section, Kathrine Poole analyzes the use of imagery in the wedding celebrations of 1589 and 1608 of Ferdinando I de'Medici to Christine of Lorraine and Cosimo II to Maria Maddelena of Austria. These featured elaborate spectacles, including mock naval battles that involved the participation of the Cavalieri de Santo Stefano, a crusading military order established to reclaim the holy land. Some of the festivities were public while others had limited and focused audiences for whom the messages encoded in the theatrical displays would have resonated.

Liminality, Reception and the Meaning of Movement

The Mass incorporated movement from the procession to the actions that took place around the Eucharist. Ecclesiastical space and its decoration capitalized on the idea of forced motion and captive audiences to reinforce the complex theological ideas presented and performed there. Ritual entrances and exits, designing objects with movement in mind, theological notions seen in cosmic maps reflected in shapes of portals. Church portals served as both sites of entrance and introduction to church buildings, and in this way their shapes and decorations projected information for those moving through them. But they also functioned as backdrops for performances and rituals that took place in church of them and in movement through them. Mickey Abel connects medieval diagrams to the tympanum-less portals of Western

France and Northern Spain to the idea of active comprehension as the participant enters the steps and passes through these simple portals. Liminal spaces shape the experience and interactions with the spaces further the devotional and symbolic aims of the church itself. Janet Snyder examines the meaning encoded through the experiences of approaching and moving through the sculptured portal programs found on twelfth-century Gothic cathedrals throughout France. How the jamb statues were meant to me understood and the focus of interaction is revealed through the author's perceptual approach. In Snyder's essay we find that these figures were not simply static architectural elements but instead functioned as reactive and involved actors in the experience of crossing the Cathedral's threshold. Using reception theory, Vibeke Olson examines how Gothic sculptural programs on Cathedral portals would have been understood and interacted with by medieval viewers. The knowledge of the ways and means to salvation required by a variety of audiences, especially pilgrims, is also explored. Finally, Rita Tekippe's essay discusses how processions were planned and implemented in medieval Tournai. With careful stage managing in terms of the placement of participants and the designing of art objects with such movement in mind, Tekippe illustrates how such processions were used to bind the community together.

PART I

MANIPULATING OBJECTS, MANIPULATIVE OBJECTS

1. HUGGING THE SAINT: IMPROVISING RITUAL ON THE PILGRIMAGE TO SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA

Kathleen Ashley

This essay will bring together ritual theory and the cultural studies of pilgrimage in a mutually illuminating conjunction, with examples drawn from Santiago de Compostela—the third major international pilgrimage destination for the Middle Ages after Jerusalem and Rome. Twenty-first century pilgrims arriving at the shrine in Santiago de Compostela, Galicia, follow an established sequence of actions, starting at a marble pillar in the twelfth-century doorway (the *Portico de la Gloria*) where pilgrims place their fingers into indentations that have been worn away by other fingers over the centuries and bump heads with a figure carved on the other side;[1] entering the nave and ascending above the main altar, pilgrims then hug the large polychrome statue of Santiago, from there they descend into the crypt to see the tomb containing the relics of the saint and his two disciples and, finally, they receive a stamp on the official document, the Compostela, attesting to the successful completion of their journey. These interactions at the sanctuary are codified in contemporary pilgrim literature and in tourist guides as the expected conclusion of the pilgrimage to Santiago, and most visitors willingly comply without asking many questions about the meaning or origins of the rituals.

First-person narratives of the twelfth through the eighteenth centuries similarly testify to the importance of ritual contact with physical objects along the pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela. Feathers of the "miraculous chickens" in the church of Santo Domingo de la Calzada were gathered by pilgrims, who also carried a stone from

[1] The fingerprints are at the lower end of the central column of the mullion, which is carved with a Tree of Jesse. The unidentified kneeling figure on the other side is traditionally called the Saint of Bumps (*Santo dos Croques*), and has sometimes been taken as a portrait of the Romanesque sculptor/architect, Master Mateo, who was responsible for completing the cathedral in the twelfth-century. For illustrations of the Portico de la Gloria and the saint's statue over the main altar, see Ch. 9 in Kathleen Ashley and Marilyn Deegan, *Being a Pilgrim: Art and Ritual on the Medieval Routes to Santiago* (Farnham, Surrey: Lund Humphries, 2009), pp. 221–43.

Triacastela's limestone quarry to the kilns at Castañeda. In Santiago, pilgrims of earlier centuries interacted not just with church sculpture but also with the saint's relics—his staff, the instrument that cut off his head, the chain with which he was tied, and other extensions of his bodily sanctity. Although not always authorized by church authorities as rituals, the material interactions associated with the pilgrimage might be classified as "ritualized." They developed as pilgrim practices that, in many cases, the clerical authorities eventually appropriated because of their popularity. Typically, ecclesiastical appropriation was accompanied by a stabilizing of the interpretation given to a ritual or an object that, in popular use, had been open to a variety of meanings.

To examine the objects associated with pilgrimage thus requires that we put them into a ritual context where the response of the pilgrim is as important as the intention of the clerical sponsor. Surviving medieval and early modern pilgrim narratives give us access to the responses from earlier centuries and, furthermore, suggest interpretations of ritual gestures and the handling of ritual objects that differ crucially from influential anthropological models. Elisabeth Collins has identified the recurrent "paradox of agency and structure" in analyses of ritual."[2] For Marxist theorists—who have been especially influential for post-structuralism—the repetitive structures of ritual inculcate society's dominant ideologies and reinforce the power of the privileged. If many theorists of ritual emphasize "structure," this essay will explore agency. My broad thesis is that current definitions of ritual privilege the repetitive, formulaic, and even abstract nature of ritual response, whereas I would highlight ritual's materiality and plasticity—its tendency to variably appropriate concrete ritual objects depending on context and user.[3]

The term I'd suggest to characterize pilgrimage rituals is "improvisation," a characteristic that culminates in pilgrim interactions with the saint's statue at the shrine in Santiago. The gesture of "hugging

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[2] For a brief, but insightful introduction to some of the issues involved in discussing ritual, see Elizabeth Collins, "Reflections on Ritual and on Theorizing about Ritual," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 12 (1998), pp. 1–7. Collins identifies four problematic areas in ritual theory: the problem of definition, the question of meaning, the paradox of agency and structure, and ritual as "drastic metaphor" or human world-making.

[3] Another article with a similar argument against "ritual's over-confident declaration of form against indeterminacy," is Gavin Brown, "Theorizing Ritual as Performance: Explorations of Ritual Indeterminacy," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 17 (2003), pp. 3–16.

the saint" is now liturgically reified and controlled by the cathedral authorities, but in earlier centuries the action was less codified and could even be playful. Testimony of the early pilgrimage narratives reveals that interaction with the saint's statue might take place within a ritual framework, but that the gestures were open to manipulation by the individual user, who often appears to be improvising. At Santiago, this improvisation with the statue can be seen as a popular response to the difficulty of accessing the body of the saint between the twelfth and the nineteenth centuries, when considerable ambiguity surrounded the location of his tomb.

Anthropologists Speaking of Ritual

The anthropologist Stanley J. Tambiah's definition of ritual represents the generally-accepted view of his peers: "Ritual is a culturally constructed system of symbolic communication. It is constituted of patterned and ordered sequences of words and acts, often expressed in multiple media, whose content and arrangement are characterized in varying degree by formality (conventionality), stereotypy (rigidity), condensation (fusion), and redundancy (repetition)."[4] This anthropological formulation makes the patterning and the repetitiveness of ritual actions integral to enabling cultural communication. In his essay, "A Performative Approach to Ritual," Tambiah stresses that "social communication, of which ritual is a special kind, portrays many features that have little to do with the transmission of new information and everything to do with interpersonal orchestration and with social integration and continuity."[5] Note that Tambiah downplays the role of ritual in providing "new information" and emphasizes its role in fostering "social integration and continuity"—in other words, continuity, not change, is the outcome of ritual. For Tambiah, meaning in ritual therefore comes not through an explicit message, but through what he calls "pattern recognition" and "configurational awareness." The terms Tambiah uses—"pattern," "configurations" "redundancy," "recursive

[4] Stanley J. Tambiah, *Culture, Thought, and Social Action: An Anthropological Perspective* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), p. 128.

[5] Stanley J. Tambiah, "A Performative Approach to Ritual," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 65 (1979), p. 138.

loops," "sequencing rules," and so on—all convey his sense that ritual is essentially characterized by recognizable repetition,[6] repetition that solidifies the social order.

Another leading theorist of ritual who has influenced cultural studies is Maurice Bloch, a functionalist for whom ritual—explicitly and unambiguously—secures order in society. As a Marxist, Bloch sees ritual as belonging to the superstructure of society and therefore serving to mask or mystify real social relations, which in turn assists those in power to maintain their privileges. In the subtle materialist analysis of Bloch, ritual is "one process by which ideology is created both individually and historically."[7] He sees ritual as only one kind of social communication, one opposed to mundane concerns, practical events, and nature, where other kinds of social communication take place. His formulation is that:

> recognizing the presence of *two cognitive systems* which organize two kinds of communication, occurring at different moments in the long conversation... solves the theoretical difficulties which we raised concerning those social theories which make use of notions of superstructure... In other words, people may be extensively mystified by the *static* and organic imaginary models of their society which gain a shadowy phenomenological reality in ritual communication; but they also have available to them *another* source of concepts, the use of which leads to the realization of exploitation and its challenge (my italics).[8]

Bloch thus sees ritual as a means of creating and maintaining social structures—as conservative—while it is from cognitive processes *outside ritual* that the possibility of change comes. As he says, it is by using the other source of concepts, *not ritual*, that the person can realize and challenge exploitation.

On this theoretical base, Bloch sees the symbols used in ritual as rigidly stylized in form. He claims they are repetitive, with a limited

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[6] My own reading of Tambiah on ritual is that his broad approach often promises insights that his actual definitions of ritual—which are narrow—tend to undercut, leaving an impression of ambiguity in his theorizing about ritual. In other words, definitions offered by anthropologists are not always entirely trustworthy guides to their best thinking about ritual; however, their definitions have been very influential, so they bear examination.

[7] Maurice Bloch, *Ritual, History and Power: Selected Papers in Anthropology* (London: Athlone, 1989), p. 12.

[8] Bloch, *Ritual, History and Power*, pp. 14–15.

choice of content, vocabulary, intonation, and so on.[9] His primary examples come from music, considering ritual song typically restricted and impoverished relative to ordinary everyday speech. Rather than arguing that ritual can be a "kind of supercommunication, a supreme occasion for creativity," Bloch argues that it is "an inferior form of communication."[10] He concludes that "ritual is a kind of tunnel into which one plunges, and where, since there is no possibility of turning either to right or left, the only thing to do is to follow."[11]

For Bloch, the symbolic objects, gestures and verbal formulae used in ritual are the mechanisms by which the power structures in society authorize themselves; material objects are preeminently appropriate to ritual's symbolic purposes since they "can only be part of a message with very weak propositional force but as a result gain in ambiguity and hence their illocutionary and emotional force."[12] Rituals have illocutionary force: what they *do*—not what they *say* about the world—is important. Bloch then argues that the qualities of ritual cognition (that it is stylized, repetitive, and so on) inculcate the society's dominant ideology. Ritual actions through their repetition reproduce powerful ideologies within individual subjectivities and thus help to structure important aspects of social existence without appearing to be externally produced. In Bloch's understanding of ritual, the strength of such implicit ideological structuring is immense and important, and it therefore renders negligible any individual intention or agency.

Anthropological accounts of ritual like those of Tambiah and Bloch emphasize the power of traditional and collective experience, whereas the very nature of pilgrimage as both institutionally sponsored and individually experienced must allow for the possibility of contested interpretations and idiosyncratic personal responses.[13] To speak in terms of "appropriation" and "improvisation," as I will do in this essay, strongly suggests agents who are deliberately and knowingly making

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[9] Bloch, p. 25.
[10] Bloch, p. 38.
[11] Bloch, pp. 41–42.
[12] Bloch, p. 41.
[13] For extended analyses of "Art in Ritual Context," see the special issue of the *Journal of Ritual Studies* 6 (1992), edited by Kathleen Ashley and Irene J. Winter; the "Introduction," pp. 1–11, discusses the role of artworks and architecture in/as ritual frame and suggests that accounts of ritual activity show participant responses to be diverse.

choices.[14] Both terms are intended to highlight the *intentionality* of much ritual activity, as against the idea that those performing ritual actions often do not understand why they are doing what they do, just that it is "traditional"—that is, the way one does it and has always done it—with the reasons either buried in the past or (as in Bloch's analysis) deliberately masked from the participants by those in power.[15] The concepts of appropriation and improvisation also imply that ritual is not a static phenomenon, a set of unchanging recurrent actions, but rather takes place within time and is always subject to change. Appropriating an extant set of ritual actions carries the implication that they will serve purposes in the present, and those may or may not be identical to the purposes for which the ritual was originally created. Appropriation opens the possibility not just of shifts in the purpose and meaning of a ritual but also of changing the ritual actions themselves as they are adapted to present circumstances.

For understanding the rituals of pilgrimage, Victor Turner's cultural concept of a "liminal" or threshold state of imagination and possibility has been useful to many scholars. In the medieval Latin texts, visiting the shrine of a saint is quite literally described as entering a liminal state—one goes *ad limina*, to the threshold of the sacred (*ad limina Beati Jacobi*). Turner called liminality "the subjunctive," the "what if" state, and associated it not just with ritual but with leisure, game, play, and the arts. For Turner, ritual at its most serious is symbolic action that can enact change, but ritual also allows the *temporary* exploration of other states of being and opens up imaginative possibilities. Thus, whereas other cultural theorists of ritual use metaphors of fixity and rigid repetition, Turner's metaphors for ritual as a liminal activity are those of "flow," of fluidity, of unplanned openness.[16] Turner associated liminality with an erasure of status markers, a stepping outside of hierarchy and structural differentiation with a resulting sense of broad

[14] See the fuller discussion of "appropriation" in the special issue of the *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 32 (2002) on "The Cultural Processes of 'Appropriation'" that I co-edited with Véronique Plesch.

[15] Catherine Bell borrows the term "misrecognition" from Pierre Bourdieu for the rhetorical ploy—the claim that a ritual has been done from time immemorial—that masks the reality of most ritual adaptations and changes; *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 108–10.

[16] Turner defines liminality as a state of ambiguity, even paradox that mediates between customary categories. See my introductory essay to *Victor Turner and the Construction of Cultural Criticism* (Bloomington: Indiana, 1990), p. xviii.

human affiliation that he called "communitas."[17] Where ordinary social existence exhibited "structure" through classification, for him liminality represented "anti-structure," the antithesis of social differentiation whether economic, political, or gendered. Going on pilgrimage, leaving the identities of ordinary life for the identity of a "pilgrim," was for Turner the archetypal liminal experience.

Establishing Rituals of Pilgrimage

What we note immediately in looking at specific historical pilgrimages is that they almost always begin as unstructured movements of believers that the religious authorities may challenge. Typically, those authorities then attempt to establish their own control over the pilgrimage activities, appropriating some popular rituals to their own purposes and adding other rituals of clerical inspiration. As liminal events pilgrimages are therefore commonly sites of contestation and multiple interpretations, and with historical perspective we can often trace the processes of appropriation and improvisation by which material objects took on ritual functions.

An initial example of the alacrity with which the clergy seized upon pilgrimage and its objects as a site for ritualization is furnished by the ceremony for blessing of the scrip (or shoulder bag) and staff, the essential departure rite for medieval pilgrimage. Those items were originally of practical use for pedestrian pilgrims, but they became the "*signa peregrinationis* (signs of pilgrimage) of the *habitus peregrinorum*, the judicial status of the pilgrim."[18] The church's rite is found

[17] Subsequent scholars have pointed out that often liminal states generate contestation, as various parties struggle for dominance in an unstructured and still-fluid situation. For example, the laity often contested the clergy's control over sacred space and ritual actions, which was especially true with rituals like pilgrimage that were an important part of popular religion. See Kathleen Ashley and Pamela Sheingorn, "Liturgy as Social Performance: Expanding the Definitions" in *The Liturgy of the Medieval Church*, ed. Thomas J. Heffernan and E. Ann Matter (2nd ed. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2005), pp. 635–52; see also critique of Turner's concept of liminality by John Eade and Michael J. Sallnow, eds. *Contesting the Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991).

[18] According to Anja Grebe, "Pilgrims and Fashion: The Functions of Pilgrims' Garments" in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, eds. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe (Leiden: Brill, 2005), p. 18.

in most missals and sacramentaries of the high Middle Ages,[19] and the explicit symbolization of the two is laid out in a twelfth-century sermon for the Santiago cult known as the *Veneranda dies*. The scrip should be small because the pilgrim is only to carry the most minimal supplies, and it should remain open (not tied) to signify readiness to share with all who need it. The staff is not just a physical support, but also a defense against wolves and savage dogs, and therefore a symbol of faith that gives support on the long and dangerous road of life.[20] Within a medieval ritual context, the bag and the staff—although simple, practical objects—have a powerful semiotic function so that taking them up becomes a proclamation of pilgrim identity. Likewise their representation in sculpture or painting is enough to convey the message that we are seeing an image of pilgrimage.

Along the pilgrimage routes to Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, Spain, many of the so-called "rituals" performed by pilgrims likewise have little to do with official religious significance, except as retrospectively rationalized. In some cases they simply exist as popular practices of the pilgrimage route and have not been appropriated by the clerical authorities, perhaps because they take place outside and not in spaces controlled by the clergy. From the twelfth century onward, for example, pilgrims approaching the city of Santiago usually halted at a stream outside the city (Lavacolla) where they washed themselves; medieval pilgrim narratives merely record the action, leaving its significance ambiguous, although it has been interpreted as a form of ritual cleansing before entry to a holy place.

By contrast, the miracle known as the "the hanged un-hanged" or the "hanged innocent" and its accompanying rituals have been appro-

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[19] See discussion of dates and kinds of blessing in Robert Plötz, "Pèlerins en chemin sur les lieux saints" in *Pèlerinages: Compostelle, Jerusalem, Rome*, ed. Paolo Caucci von Sauken (Paris: Desclée de Brower, 1999), pp. 75–102. On the development of rituals for setting off and return from pilgrimage, see Luis Vázquez de Parga et al., *Las peregrinaciones a Santiago de Compostela*, T. 1 (1948; facsimile Pamplona: Iberdrola, 1992), pp. 137–41.

[20] An English translation of the sermon may be found in *The Miracles of Saint James: Translations from the Liber Sancti Jacobi*, ed. and trans. Thomas F. Coffey, Linda Kay Davidson and Maryjane Dunn (New York: Italica Press, 1996), pp. 8–56. See pp. 23–24 for comments about the purse and staff. The sermon is found in the first section of the *Codex Calixtinus*, compiled in the twelfth-century at Santiago with materials (sermons, prayers, music, miracles, narrative history and legends as well as the first pilgrim's guide) for celebrating the cult of Saint James; see *Liber Sancti Jacobi: Codex Calixtinus*, (eds.) Walter Muir Whitehill *et al*. 3 vols. (Santiago: CSIC, 1944).

priated by the church at Santo Domingo de la Calzada, whose importance on the pilgrimage route since the Middle Ages rests on the fame of its miraculous chickens.[21] In the town's version of the miracle story, a family of pilgrims was staying at an inn when the inn-keeper planted a silver chalice in the luggage of the teenaged son, then accused him of being a thief. The young pilgrim was convicted by a corrupt judge and hanged. His broken-hearted parents continued on to Santiago de Compostela, where they prayed to the saint for a miracle. On their return through the town of Santo Domingo they found their son alive on the gibbet—supposedly sustained by Saint Dominic—and went to the judge's house where he was eating a roast chicken dinner. The judge refused to believe the miracle, saying that the son was no more alive than those chickens on his platter, Immediately, the chickens came to life and began to crow.

The miracle story was widely disseminated in medieval Europe and innumerable visual representations (in stone, stained glass, wall painting, manuscript illumination, etc.) were made in the later Middle Ages.[22] Sometimes the miracle was attributed to the Virgin Mary (as in Alphonso el Sabio's 13th century *Cantigas de Santa Maria*)[23] or to saints other than James; sometimes the family is German or Greek, and in some versions the innkeeper becomes a female servant whose

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[21] The history of Santo Domingo as a pilgrimage center has been recounted with references in Luis Vázquez de Parga, *Las peregrinaciones*, T. II, pp. 162–70; see esp. pp. 165–67. For illustrations of the chicken miracle, see Ashley and Deegan, *Being a Pilgrim*, chap. 7, pp. 183–201, esp. 193–97.

[22] The scholarly literature about this miracle is extensive, given its ubiquitous representations in late medieval narrative and art. A classic early article is by Baudouin de Gaiffier, "Un thème hagiographique: Le pendu miraculeusement sauvé," *Revue belge d'archéologie et d'histoire de l'art*. 13 (1943), pp. 123–48. See also the survey of historical sources in Vázguez de Parga et al., *Las peregrinaciones*, T. I, pp. 575–86; and the materials collected by Rodof Lloréns i Jordana, "Sobre una llegenda popular medieval. Un penjat preservat de morir miraculosament. Un gall i gallina ressuscitats miraculosament" in *Arxiu de tradicions populars*, fasc. IV, pp. 200–10 and fasc. V, pp. 266–274 with addition by F. Bouza-Brey and A. de Apraiz, fasc. VI, pp. 323–25. Dominique Rigaux describes the legend in mural paintings of the French and Italian Alps, "Autour des fresques de Cellio: le miracle du pèlerin pendu dépendu dans les regions alpines au Quatrocento," in *L'Image du pèlerin au Moyen Age et sous l'Ancien Regime*. Sous la direction de Pierre-André Sigal (Gramat: Association des Amis de Rocamadour, 1994), pp. 183–99.

[23] Connie L. Scarborough, "The Pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*," in *The Pilgrimage to Compostela in the Middle Ages,* eds. Maryjane Dunn and Linda Kay Davidson (New York: Routledge, 1996), pp. 97–112, esp. 100–101; the miracle happens outside Toulouse through the agency of the Virgin Mary, not Saint James or Saint Dominic.

advances the son resisted. Most commonly, the story is associated with Saint James and is represented in chapels or churches along pilgrimage routes. In the earliest version (found in the miracle collection that is part of the 12th century *Codex Calixtinus*) the miracle occurred in Toulouse;[24] however, by the later Middle Ages Santo Domingo de la Calzada had managed to assert its authenticity as the place of the miracle with their patron saint as the miracle worker, and the chickens became the town's hallmark. Live white chickens in a coop were placed inside the church, where the story was retold to those passing through town, and Santiago pilgrims participated in clerically-supervised ritual activities.

The one thing that all Santiago pilgrim narratives written in the 14th century and thereafter have in common is an account of stopping at Santo Domingo de la Calzada to see and interact with the legendary white chickens. Pilgrims usually tried to collect a white feather from the chickens inside the church as a kind of memento or talisman—clearly a popular ritual, but one not discouraged by the authorities, who built a still-functioning gilded metal cage high up on the wall for their famous chickens in the 15th century.

Despite clerical appropriation of the legend, the ritual gathering of the feathers remained open to individual improvisation and interpretation. In his 1417 otherwise undeveloped account of going to Santiago, Nompar, Lord of Caumont, retells the entire story of Santo Domingo's miraculous chickens, stating in conclusion that he saw the chickens and can verify that they are white as in the legend.[25] Hermann Künig von Vach, another pilgrim author who visited Santo Domingo in 1495, tells his readers to take the chickens that escaped roasting as a sign that God can work miracles: "Look at them well and marvel at God's miraculous power; they escaped from the spit on which they were roasted. I know that it is no lie as I have seen for myself the hole through which they flew, one after the other, and the hearth in which they were

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[24] See Coffey *et al., The Miracles of Saint James*, pp. 68–70. In this version there are no miraculously resurrected chickens, just the hanged son whom the saint has preserved. The bibliography to this edition and translation includes several articles about the miracle story (see n. 553, p. 139).

[25] Nompar de Caumont, "Pèlerinage du Seigneur de Caumont à Saint-Jacques de Compostelle," in *Sur le chemin de Compostelle: Trois récits de pèlerins partis vers Saint-Jacques (1417–1726–1748).* (Paris: Cosmopole, 2001), pp. 171–79, esp. 175–76. Other than the account of this miracle, which impressed him, Nompar's account is simply a list of the places along his route to Santiago de Compostela.

being roasted.[26] Less credulous, Jakob Sobieski (the father of the king of Poland), who visited in 1611, jeered at pilgrims who put a few bread crumbs into the cage; according to Sobieski, pilgrims believed that if the chickens ate the offering the pilgrims were assured of reaching Compostela safe and sound, but that if the chickens would not eat the crumbs the pilgrims' death was foretold.[27] The Italian Domenico Laffi, visiting in 1670, says the sacristan gave him feathers from the birds and that he gave them a little of his bread. He offers the explanation that the chickens will only eat bread that Santiago pilgrims have gotten for love of God, because if it has been purchased the birds will not eat it! He adds that when there are no pilgrims to feed the birds their caretaker dresses as a pilgrim and begs in the town for their food.[28] Twenty years later (1690), the German Johannes Limberg of Waldeck mockingly says that although thousands of pilgrims pluck a feather from the white chickens the cock and the hen are—miraculously—never plucked bare.[29] Guillaume Manier in the early 18th century adds that two or three white feathers are given to each pilgrim, and that most choose to stick them into their hats as protection on the road.[30] Clearly, within the framework of an ecclesiastically-authorized visit to the legendary chickens at Santo Domingo de la Calzada, individuals were free to improvise both their own rituals and their own interpretations.

Visiting the Saint

As many scholars have noted, the ultimate goal of the pilgrimage was to touch the relics of the saint at the shrine. During the high Middle Ages, that usually meant touching the stone of the tomb where the

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[26] Hermann Künig von Vach, *The Pilgrimage and Path to Saint James*, trans. John Durant (London: Confraternity of Saint James, 1993), p. 12.

[27] Plötz, "Pèlerins en chemin," p. 85.

[28] Domenico Laffi, *A Journey to the West: The Diary of a Seventeenth-Century Pilgrim from Bologna to Santiago de Compostela*, trans. James Hall (Leiden: Primavera, 1997), p. 129. Laffi's account of Santo Domingo de la Calzada is characteristically elaborate and includes an account of the miracle and information about pilgrim responses to the chickens in the church, pp. 128–35.

[29] Plötz, "Pèlerins en chemin," p. 84.

[30] Guillaume Manier, "Pèlerinage d'un paysan picard à St-Jacques de Compostelle," in *Sur le chemin de Compostelle: Trois récits de pèlerins parties vers Saint Jacques* (1417–1726–1748), p. 71.

saint was buried or seeing the reliquary containing a part of the saint. According to Pierre-André Sigal, medieval pilgrims hugged the stone, wood or metal while praying, and the expression "kissing the sepulcher" was synonymous with the accomplishment of their pilgrimage.[31] Given the central placement of the pilgrimage shrine and its relics within sacred space, we would expect that its access rituals would be completely controlled by the clergy. The rituals at the shrine of Santiago, however, reveal that even there, at the culminating sacred site, improvisation was possible during the Middle Ages and the early modern period.

The pilgrim narratives provide a means of tracking of those rituals historically, and in various accounts we see a contestation for control over the relics, especially those once physically associated with Saint James. In the mid-1460's, for example, the Czech noble Leo of Rozmital made a pilgrimage to Compostela, an account of which was written in German by his companion Gabriel Tetzel and another in Czech by his squire Schaseck.[32] Although the cathedral was under siege at the time, housing horses and cows in addition to religious objects, they managed to talk their way inside the building to see it and the relics it contained. They were shown the head of James the Lesser, a piece of the Holy Cross containing a piece of the Crown of Thorns, and the chain with which St. James was kept prisoner (said to have curative powers), as well as the sickle with which he was beheaded. Schaseck reports with the most detail:

> First they showed the tomb of St. James which is built upon the altar itself. Beside it is shown the sickle with which St. James was beheaded, hanging from the altar by an iron chain.… Afterwards they showed us the staff which the saint carried in his journeyings over the whole world, which is fastened to the altar and encased in lead. For pilgrims broke off small pieces, so that it would have been destroyed if the Pope had not ordered it, in the nick of time, to be encased in lead and preserved.

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[31] Pierre-André Sigal, *Les Marcheurs de dieu: pèlerinages et pèlerins au Moyen Age* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1974), p. 81. For his summary of typical rituals at pilgrimage sanctuaries, see pp. 75–84.

[32] *Travels of Leo Rozmital through Germany, Flanders, England, France, Spain, Portugal and Italy: 1465–1467*, trans. and ed. Malcolm Letts (Cambridge: University Press, 1957). The party reached Santiago in 1465 at the time that a local lord, supported by the townspeople, was besieging the cathedral. The archbishop Alfonso III had been shut out of the city and only his mother, brother and a cardinal were resident in the church.

> Nothing can now be seen except the iron ferrule at the lower end. It can be touched by the hand.[33]

The pilgrims, in breaking off small pieces of the staff to bring home, challenged the cathedral's control over the relic, a challenge the clergy met by encasing of the staff in protective lead.

Allowing pilgrim access to the bourdon and the "showing" of other relics of Saint James in the cathedral were culminating rituals at Santiago—ones in which both the populace and the clergy were invested.[34] These rituals are repeated in many of the autobiographical accounts from the fourteenth through the eighteenth century. Twenty years after Leo Rozmital and his traveling companions visited Santiago, Jean de Tournai entered Compostella on January 25, 1489. The next day he went to the church and confessed behind the great altar near a small altar, where he received mass. Then, he says, they showed me the "*bourdon* of Saint James that was in the middle of the church… I heard a little bell ring and we went to the end of the church where we were shown the head of Saint James the apostle and several other reliquaries."[35]

Fifty years later, in the early sixteenth century, a German pilgrim Zielbeke arrives in Compostela on Holy Friday and goes to the cathedral where there are explanations in French and German about the relics. The head of James the Lesser is said to be the most precious, but the body of Saint James the Greater is under the great altar, although Zielbeke was unable to see it. The staff that Jean de Tournai saw is still enclosed in lead so only the iron point was sticking out, and one could touch it. Zielbeke says, "Before the choir where the priests sing there is a column with a hole. You put your hand below and feel a sharp piece of metal and a baton. They say that it's the *bourdon* of Saint

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[33] *Travels of Leo of Rozmital,* pp. 116—117.

[34] Pierre-André Sigal notes that objects that had been in contact with primary relics tended to be collected and treated as relics themselves. Called *brandea*, they were such things as the cloth that had wrapped a relic, the oil from a lamp that burned near the tomb, the wax of candles lighted near the saint, dust from the tomb or moss covering the stones of sarcophagus, threads from the cloth covering the altar, flowers on the altar, the cord of the church bell, the wood of the door, etc. *Marcheurs de Dieu*, pp. 31–32.

[35] Pierre Barret and Jean-Noël Gurgand, *Priez pour nous à Compostelle: La vie des pèlerins sur les chemins de Saint-Jacques* (Paris: Hachette, 1999), p. 231; my translation from the French. The head was that of James the Lesser, not the Greater who was venerated at Santiago de Compostela; however, Jean de Tournai seems to have been told otherwise.

James the Greater."[36] Two centuries later, in 1726, when Guillaume Manier comes to Santiago, the ritual showing of the staff is essentially unchanged. He says, "In front of the choir of the canons is a pillar on the right, in which along its length is a furrow, within which is enclosed the actual "bourdon" of Saint James, of which the pilgrims have the satisfaction of touching the metal from the bottom."[37] The ritual showing of these auxiliary objects in identical fashion over many centuries demonstrates the strong desire on the part of pilgrims to make physical contact with the saint, but it also points to the crucial problem at Santiago: the absence of bodily relics of Saint James in a form that was accessible to pilgrims.

The impossibility of seeing and touching the tomb containing the saint's body was a source of distress to pilgrims at the shrine from the twelfth century to the nineteenth. At least until the early years of the twelfth century, pilgrims could venerate Saint James at his tomb. The *Liber Sancti Jacobi* author says that he saw the tomb under the main altar, although his wording is ambiguous: "In the above-mentioned basilica lies, so it is said, the revered body of the Blessed James beneath the high altar which was magnificently made in his honor, sealed within by a marble sarcophagus in a fine arched sepulcher, which work is of admirable workmanship and appropriate in size. Furthermore, that the body is said to be immoveable, is attested by St. Theodomire, bishop of this city, who discovered it and could not move it from this place. May transmontane rivals blush, therefore, who claim to have any part of him or his relics."[38] Scholarly discussion of the many ambiguities in this passage[39]—the statement "so it is said," the "immovability" of the body, the claims of other churches to possess parts of the saint's body, etc.—has reached few firm conclusions. We do know, however, that at some point before 1150 the crypt was closed[40] and the relics were hidden from pilgrims. The relics were only recovered in 1879, when they were placed in a silver chasse and put in the crypt under the altar in the place where the tombs of the

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[36] *Priez pour nous*, p. 233; my translation.

[37] Guillaume Manier, *Sur le Chemin de Compostelle*, p. 90; my translation.

[38] *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela: Critical Edition*, Vol. II: *The Text*, eds. Paula Gerson *et al.* (London: Harvey Miller, 1998), p. 79.

[39] See literature cited in notes 108–11 of *The Pilgrim's Guide*, pp. 210–13. Also John Williams, "Introduction," in *The Codex Calixtinus and the Shrine of St. James*, ed. John Williams and Alison Stones (Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1992), p. XIII.

[40] Vázguez de Parga, *Las peregrinaciones*, T.II, pp. 365–66.

apostle and his disciples Athanase and Theodore had supposedly been discovered at the beginning of the 9th century.[41] Between the twelfth and the late nineteenth centuries, therefore, pilgrims to Santiago were frustrated in their attempt to reach their final goal of the shrine with the saint's body itself, and their pilgrimage accounts reflect diverse responses to the lack of a culminating ritual.

The cathedral authorities contributed to the ambiguities around the location of their saint's relics, consequently frustrating many pilgrims. In some cases, they appear to have misled pilgrims, passing off the reliquary containing the head of James the Lesser as that of the cathedral's patron, James the Greater. Jean de Tournai in 1489 says that he saw head of Saint James, the great apostle and cousin of Jesus, and the priests on duty (speaking in Latin, French, and German) said that whoever did not believe firmly that the saint's body was in the altar had made their pilgrimage in vain.[42] Jean de Tournai notes that he had already been shown the relics of the saint in Toulouse, but his solution was to believe that the body was in Toulouse and the head in Santiago. Likewise, Arnold von Harff who came to Santiago in 1496 says that the body of Saint James is said to be under the great altar, although some say it is at Toulouse. He proposes offerings to the authorities to show him the body. They respond that whoever doesn't believe that the body is under the altar will become like a mad dog.[43] Visiting in the early sixteenth century, Zielbeke, too, is told that the body is under the altar but cannot be seen. He responds that they ought at least to show it at Easter.[44]

Given the difficulty of access to the saintly body itself, one of the most important rituals for pilgrims arriving at the shrine became the visit to the more than life-size statue of Saint James above the main altar, which pilgrims were and are allowed to manipulate by climbing a set of stairs behind the altar. It is likely that a seated statue of Saint James in stone was high up behind the altar before the consecration of the church in 1211; there are twelfth-century references to lighting candles before the *figuram beati Jacobi*. The statue was repainted

[41] *Compostelle*, p. 39. For survey and analysis of the complex history of Saint James' relics, see Denise Péricard-Méa, *Compostelle et cultes de saint Jacques au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2000), Ch. V "Reliques de saint Jacques," pp. 97–119.

[42] *Priez pour nous*, p. 231.

[43] *Priez pour nous*, p. 232.

[44] *Priez pour nous*, pp. 232–33.

several times after that date, and some pilgrims refer to it as made of wood. The present statue with the saint in pilgrim's costume—a bourdon in his left hand and a phylactery in his right with the phrase "Hic est corpus Divi Iacobi Apostoli ac hispaniarum Patroni"—replaced it in 1665.[45]

The ways in which pilgrims handled the statue evolved over the centuries and demonstrated that improvisation, even with such an important ritual, was tolerated. When Jean de Tournai went to Santiago in 1489, the statue had a crown on its head. He says that he climbed a wooden ladder behind the great altar, took the saint's crown in his hands and set it on his own head.[46] The ritual gesture recalls iconographic representations of Saint James crowning pilgrims for having completed their pilgrimage to Santiago, according to Robert Plötz.[47] Seven years later, a similar action but with a different interpretation is reported by Arnold von Harff—an affluent 25 year old German who began a pilgrimage to Santiago in 1496 as part of an adventurous world tour that took him first to Africa and the Holy Land before taking the southern route across France to Spain. When Arnold von Harff arrives in Compostela, he reports that "Above the main altar there is a great wooden saint representing Saint James, topped by a silver crown, and pilgrims mount behind the altar and don the crown, which provokes mockeries of us Germans by the inhabitants of the city."[48] The silver crown of Saint James, a relic in its own right, is capable of being manipulated by pilgrims—to whom it can signify variously. The possibility not just of multiple interpretations of the ritual action but also of changing the ritual itself is shown by the account of Erich Lassota de Steblau in 1581, who says that the pilgrims take the "great golden crown" suspended over the statue of Saint James and put it on the

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[45] "This is the body of James, Holy Apostle and also Patron of Spain" (my translation). Parga, *Las peregrinaciones*, II, pp. 369–70.

[46] *Priez pour nous*, p. 231. According to the Englishman William Wey in 1460, after Enrique IV captured Malaga the king of Granada's golden crown was sent to Compostela and placed on the head of the statue of St. James on the high altar; see Hogarth, p. 17. The ritual was still being followed in 1765 according to Ambrosio de Morales, *Viage de _____ por orden del rey D. Phelipe II, a los reynos de Leon y Galicia, y principiado de Asturias. Para reconocer las Reliquias de Santos, Sepulcros Reales, y Libros manuscritos de la Catedrales y Monasterios*. (Madrid: Antonio Marin, 1765). Rpt. Ed. Jose Maria Ortiz Juarez. (Oviedo: Biblioteca Popular Asturiana, 1977).

[47] Plötz, p. 78.

[48] *Priez pour nous*, p. 232; my translation. See discussion of German associations with the crown during the Middle Ages in Plötz.

head of the saint, rather than on their own heads.[49] In these accounts of handling the saint's statue there is no mention of the clergy's role as there is in descriptions of the other ritual showings.

By the seventeenth century, when the Italian Laffi writes about pilgrims at the great altar, the ritual of the saint's statue had again changed.[50] The polychrome stone or wooden statue of the saint had disappeared and been replaced by a gold and silver statue. Now pilgrims *embraced* the life-size statue of Saint James: "If you kiss it reverently you will be granted plenary indulgence, though you are not allowed to touch the sacred body itself." Rather than putting the saint's crown on their heads, pilgrims now put *their* cape on the statue and their *own* hat on its head during this ritual: "Pilgrims put their cape on the statue and their hat on its head while they embrace it, and then stay a few moments," Laffi says.[51] In the early eighteenth century, Guillaume Manier also notes the ritual of pilgrims hugging the saint while putting their own coat and hat on the statue: "On each side… there are two secret stairways…. that lead above to Saint James, where, when the pilgrims arrive there, they embrace Saint James from behind, putting their cloak on his shoulders and their hat on his head."[52] Not all pilgrims were so admiring of the custom. Cosimo III de Medici, who visited in the seventeenth century, records that pilgrims embracing the statue say "Friend, recommend me to God," but he said it was "cosa indecente e ridicola" to see it, with everyone crowding around.[53]

This ritual remains in place now in the twenty-first century, but it has evolved—retaining some earlier actions while dropping others. Pilgrims no longer put their clothing on the saint or manipulate a crown, but they do climb the stairs behind the main altar to hug the saint from behind, so that if you are standing in the nave you see a succession of hands reaching around the statue's chest. When I went to Santiago recently and climbed those stairs, I noticed that this pilgrim ritual of hugging the saint has been appropriated by the church.

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[49] Plötz, p. 78. See Plötz on *Diarium des Erich Lassota von Stebelow*, who comes to Compostela on the 25th of January 1581 after visiting Padron. The pilgrim had been part of the troops of Phillip II in his conquest of Portugal in 1579.

[50] Laffi made three pilgrimages to Compostela, in 1666, 1670, and 1673. See *A Journey to the West*, p. 11.

[51] *Journey to the West*, p. 163.

[52] *Priez pour nous*, p. 233; my translation.

[53] "An indecent and ridiculous thing" (my translation). Vazquez de Parga, *Los peregrinos*, I, p. 154.

There was a priest sitting on a little chair near the statue and every time someone hugged the saint he handed them a small card certifying that they had received an indulgence, although I doubt it was the plenary indulgence Laffi mentioned in the seventeenth century.

The popular rituals surrounding pilgrim access to the saint's statue are now codified and controlled by the clergy and, as a result, the playful interactions of past centuries have been replaced by a constrained embrace. Furthermore, pilgrims can now descend into the crypt to see the tomb containing the saint's relics; the statue is not the substitute focus of pilgrim attention that it was during the many centuries the relics were inaccessible. The testimony of medieval and early modern pilgrim narratives, however, reveals the potential of popular rituals (such as those created along pilgrimage routes) to be variably interpreted and individually appropriated. Those numerous accounts of the pilgrim experience call into question definitions of ritual as rigidly repetitive and suggest we might pursue a deeper understanding of the fundamentally improvisational nature of so much ritual behavior.

2. VOTIVES, IMAGES, INTERACTION AND PILGRIMAGE TO THE TOMB AND SHRINE OF ST. THOMAS BECKET, CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL

Sarah Blick

Candles with wicks as long as the circumference of city walls, enormous rubies, and four-foot worms were all given with heartfelt thanks to the tomb and shrine of Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral. As varied and strange as they were, such votives (or ex-votos) were a ubiquitous part of pilgrimage devotion in the Middle Ages.[1] Rather than gazing upon a painting or sculpture provided for them by the church, the laity selected, purchased, and brought an image or object to the shrine themselves. Once the gift was placed, it changed the object they had traveled to see, for the ever-growing accretion of objects to the tomb or shrine meant that the once-pristine sacred precinct was flooded with objects all of which symbolized the intense personal (and popular) devotion of individuals.

Votives, by their very nature were interactive. The devotee first made a vow to a divinity, promising them a votive either in response to a boon granted or the wish for a boon to be granted. Then they chose a particularly meaningful votive (making it, purchasing it, or donating something they already owned) relating, in their minds, to the devotional agreement they made with the saint. From there, they traveled to the place where the divinity was represented by relics or sacred images. Finally the devotee placed their votive near the shrine, physically proclaiming the saint's powers. Every pilgrim then saw not only the shrine, but the shrine in the context of a multitude of votives, some more dominant than others, but all calling out to the saint and to the viewers who came afterward. They were the physical embodiment of devotional promises. The devotees did not sit back passively,

[1] Of course votives were integral to ancient religions and are found throughout the world. Liselotte Hansmann and Lenz Kriss-Rettenbeck, *Amulett, Magic Talisman* (Hamburg: Nikol Verlagsgesellschaft, 1999).

but by adding their votive they proclaimed that they too shared in the sanctity made possible by the divinity.

Votives have been discussed in a general way, but few scholars have discussed them in terms of a specific site.[2] This is because most medieval votives have vanished and the documents recording their use are scattered. At Canterbury Cathedral no votives survive, but there are a surprising number of documents (miracle accounts, inventories, personal letters, legal cases, polemic screeds, etc.) detailing the once-ubiquitous presence of votive gifts over several centuries that allow a kind of reconstruction to take place, enabling an understanding of the issues of interaction in their use within a major pilgrimage cult. This is especially true because the records tell of votives given from all different classes that reflect the various interests and needs of myriads of pilgrim visitors. This essay will examine how votives were thought of, used, and displayed at Canterbury Cathedral's tomb and shrine of St. Thomas Becket, allowing a glimpse into how individual devotional interaction created and transformed the pilgrimage experience.

The sites at Canterbury associated with St. Thomas, including his tomb (created in 1170–1171) and shrine (created 1220) attracted countless votive gifts through centuries of active worship until the cult's destruction. The tomb was composed of "a wall of large dressed stones was constructed around the marble sarcophagus… with two windows on either side, through which visitors could put their heads inside and kiss the sarcophagus; and so because a large marble slab was placed on top…"[3] Placed between two altars, it become the central focus of the easternmost chapel in the crypt.[4] Although destroyed in 1538, its nature can be seen in its depiction in a Canterbury stained glass window and pilgrim souvenirs which show candlesticks, prayer

[2] Georges Didi-Huberman, "Heuristik und Ähnlichkeit. Der Fall der Votivbilder" in *Ebenbilder. Kopien von Körpern—Modelle des Menschen*, ed. Jan Gerchow (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2002), pp. 65–72.

[3] Benedict of Peterborough, *Miracula sancta Thome Cantuariensis*, vol. II, cap. xxix in James C. Robertson (ed.), *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury* (London: John Murray, 1876), p. 81.

[4] John of Salisbury wrote "[the monks] buried him in the crypt, before the altar of St. John the Baptist and St. Augustine, apostle of the English, in a marble tomb…" Letter 305 in (eds.) W.J. Millor and Christopher Brooke, *The Letters of John of Salisbury*, vol. II, The Late Letters (1163–1180), (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1979), pp. 734–737.

Fig. 2.1 Pilgrim leaving crutch behind as he is cured at Becket's tomb. Note votive crown in the background. Canterbury Cathedral, 1213–1216. Photo: author.

books, and a coffer box for donations littering its flat top.[5] Nearby pilgrims regularly purchased ex-votos or left their own votive donations. (fig. 2.1)

[5] For images of the tomb in stained glass, see Madeline Caviness, *The Windows of Christ Church Cathedral Canterbury* (London: Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi, Great Britain, 2, 1981), pp. 157–164, 175–214.

As impressive as the tomb and its many votives were, it would be far surpassed by gifts to the shrine where Becket's remains were translated. Every surviving account of this shrine comments on its riches in superlatives: the best, the most splendid, the almost unbelievable.[6] As Erasmus' pilgrims state in his parody

> The cheapest part was gold. Everything shone and dazzled with rare and surpassingly large jewels, some bigger than a goose egg. Some monks stood about reverently. When the cover was removed, we all adored. The prior pointed out each jewel by touching it with a white rod, adding its French name, its worth, and the name of the donor. The principal ones were gifts from kings.[7]

All were physical manifestations attesting to the power of the saint and to the interactive devotion of the numberless pilgrims.

Interaction: vows, votives, pilgrims, and the tomb and shrine of Becket

It is difficult to trace the exact impact votives made on interactive devotion because votives could be almost anything: any action or any object that the devotee decided had meaning for them and the divinity. At Canterbury Cathedral, it was the objects (rather than actions) that most concerned the medieval monks who kept records. But "objects" is a gigantic category and while they noted many types of votives, generally they focused on larger and, what they deemed, more important categories. These included images of the devotee, candles, objects that no longer tormented their owners (worms, cherry pits), and objects no longer needed, such as crutches and shackles.[8] While such diversity makes it difficult to generalize, individually the votives tell us about

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[6] Sarah Blick, "Reconstructing the Shrine of St. Thomas Becket Canterbury Cathedral" in *The Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, eds. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe (Leiden: Brill Academic Press, 2005), pp. 407–412.

[7] Erasmus, "*Peregrination Religionis Ergo*" in *Colloquies*, translated by Craig R. Thompson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 308.

[8] Hugo van der Velden worked out a basic classification of votive gifts including acts (pilgrimage, fasting) and objects (divided between utilitarian and non-utilitarian objects) in *The Donor's Image: Gerard Loyet and the Votive Portraits of Charles the Bold* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000), p. 213. See also Wolfgang Brückner, "Volkstümliche Denkstrukturen und hochschichtkiches Weltbild im Votivwesen, *Schweizerisches Archiv für Volkskunde* 59 (1963), pp. 200–202.

specific pilgrims and their need and status. A wax leg model tells of health problems, while a ruby reflects wealth and the wishes of a sovereign.

Whether they presented their votive to the tomb or the shrine, the Canterbury pilgrim either sought a particular blessing from St. Thomas Becket or they wished to give thanks for a favor already granted by vowing to present a gift. Becket's recorded miracles emphasized that the saint's help was contingent on a vow given by the supplicant. The essence of this vow was the transaction, "Help me and I will do this for you," creating a relationship between the devotee and the divinity like a feudal bond, where the vassal/supplicant placed themselves under the protection of the lord in return for performing an act that would please them.[9] Becket's devotees requested assistance in overcoming illness in themselves, their loved ones, and their farm animals. They also asked for his help in safeguarding their business affairs, their love life, and their spiritual quests and in return they presented tremendous numbers of ex-votos. Saints like Thomas Becket at St. Foy in Conques demanded gifts, their miracles accounts revealing their insistent saintly requests, often laying out the uncomfortable fate of those who chose to ignore their requests.[10]

At the core of the votive exchange was communication, not only between the devotee and the saint, but communication between clergy and laity, and (dependent on the particular shrine) communication between royalty and commoners. For the donor who placed the gift him or herself or watched as someone hung it up for them near the shrine, it was a vivid and tactile experience serving as evidence of their individual communication with divinity.

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[9] André Vauchez, *Sainthood in the Later Middle Ages*, trans. Jean Birrell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 453; Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), p. 88. Some even obtained permission from the Papacy to change the vows. The vow was almost always connected with a specific saint and a specific place where part of their relics resided. Hugo van der Velden, *The Donor's Images: Gerard Loyet and the Votive Portraits of Charles the Bold* (Brepols, 2000), pp. 196, 199.

[10] Beate Fricke, "Ecce fides," *Liber miraculorum sancta Fidis*, p. 250. See also the essay by Viola Belghaus elsewhere in this volume, who notes that such saintly behavior increased the treasures of those particular churches.

Production, Purchase, and Display of Wax Images

Objects that could be used for such powerful communication by all classes were widely available. Unfortunately, documents regarding the producers and sellers of ex-votos are relatively rare and none survive from Canterbury, but following records from other sites, we can assume they were primarily produced by chandlers and sold to medieval devotees through their local apothecary.[11] Canterbury pilgrims perhaps purchased the votives inside the church (as wax eyes and teeth were sold near the tomb of Louis of Toulouse)[12] or they could have purchased them nearby outside (as they did near York Minster).[13] An idealized vision of what their buying experience might have been can be seen in the *c.* 1500 fresco from the Castello d'Issogne in Valle d'Aosta, Italy. The painting shows a woman looking for cures at a well-stocked apothecary shop. Among the brightly labeled medicine jars are votives (in the shape of body parts, an entire figure, and a small horse) draped by their strings over a rod. (fig. 2.2)

Strings were integral to their display; only a handful of medieval wax votives survive and all of those still have their strings attached and or have holes for suspension by string. These beeswax animals, body parts, and the figure of a woman found in Exeter Cathedral[14] were all once strung over the tomb of Bishop Edmund Lacy (r. 1420–1455),

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[11] Their widespread importance is indicated by their being sometimes subject to legislation. In 1423, Parliament tried to control the price charged for "Chaundelles, Images, Figures & autres overaignes de Cere, faitz pur olations" requiring that only a small amount of profit be charged above the raw material costs of the wax. *Rotuli Parliamentorum: Index to the rolls of Parliament…from ann. 6 Edw. I. to ann. 19 Hen. VII. (A.D. 1278–A.D. 1503)*, eds. Rev. John Strachey, Rev. John Pridden, and Edward Upham, F.S.A (London, 1832), p. 453, no. XX; Edmund Waterman, *Pietas Mariana Britannica; a history of English devotion to the Most Blessed Virgin Marye Mother of God. With a catalogue of shrines, sanctuaries, offerings, bequests, and other memorials of the piety of our forefathers* (London, St. Joseph's Catholic Library, 1879), p. 75.

[12] Louis, Bishop of Toulouse, *Processus Canonizationis et Legendae variae Sancti Ludovici O.F.M. epis. Rolosani. Analecta Franciscana*, Ed. Benvenutus Bughetti, vol. VII (Rome: College of St. Bonaventura, 1951), pp. 299, 309; Finucane, p. 97.

[13] In 1475–76, a group of chandlers was fined for erecting illegal stalls along the major roads to York Minster. Rawcliffe, p. 22; *Fabric Rolls of York Minster*, ed. James Raine (Durham: Surtees Society XXXV, 1858), pp. 225–226; *York City Chamberlains' Account Rolls 1396–1500*, ed. Richard Barrie Dobson (Gateshead: Surtees Society CXCII, 1978–1979), p. 145.

[14] Teresa Moreno, "Laser Cleaning of Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Century A.D. Wax Votive Images From St. Peter's Cathedral, Exeter, England" (M.A. Thesis, University of Durham, 2001).

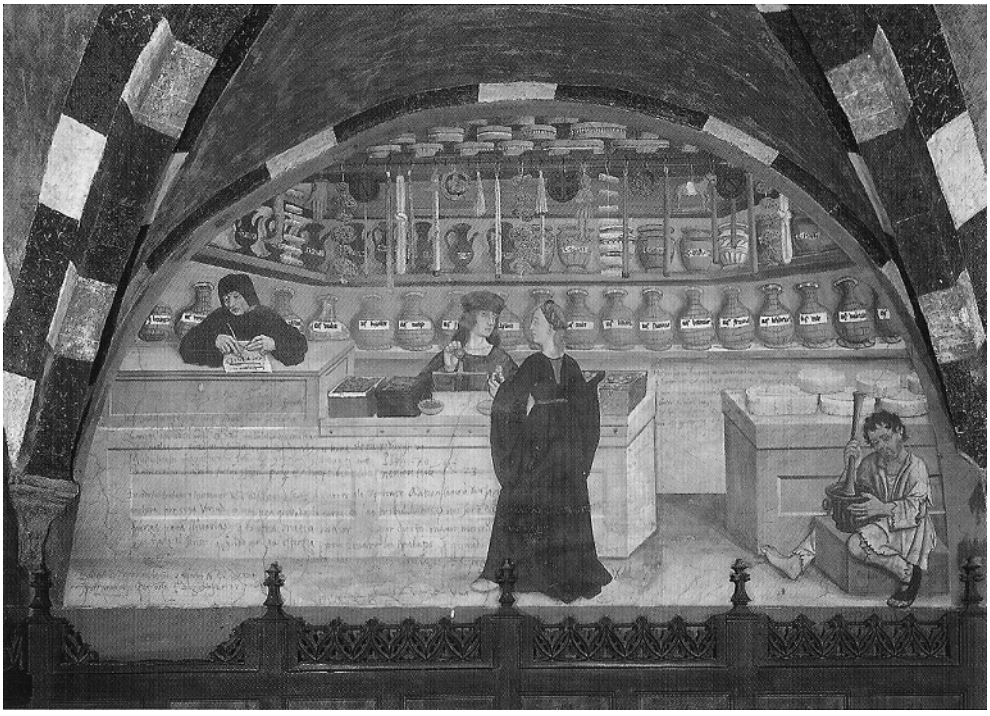

Fig. 2.2 Apothecary, fresco (*c.* 1500) from Castello d'Issogne, Valle d'Aosta, Italy. Photo: Telemann Braun.

on the north side of the screen around choir.[15] (fig. 2.3) Fifteenth and sixteenth-century paintings also show wax votives draped over display bars by their strings or arranged on tables near doors. (fig. 2.4)

The strings were not just used for sales displays, but were integral in placing the votive. Initially the pilgrim would place their gift as near to the sacred tomb as possible, as seen by the careful arrangement of votives in a panel from the *St. Wolfgang Altarpiece* where devout pilgrims have adorned the tomb with votives of a small child, swords, hands, feet, and swords. (fig. 2.5) Then, with a new wave of pilgrims,

[15] Eleanor Townsend, "Votive Offerings" in (eds.) Richard Marks and Paul Williamson, *Gothic: Art of England 1400–1547* (London: V & A Publications, 2003), fig. 45, cat. 321, p. 432; Diana Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England* (London: Hambledon, 2000), pp. 71–72, U.M. Radford, "The Wax Images found in Exeter Cathedral," *The Antiquaries Journal* XXIX (1949), pp. 164–168.

Fig. 2.3 Wax Votives, Exeter Cathedral, 15th century, beeswax. Photo: after *Gothic Art for England 1400–1547*, p. 74, fig. 45.

Fig. 2.4 Pieter Brueghel II, *Battle between Carnival and Lent* (detail). Vendor of votive images before the church entrance. 2nd ½ 16th century. Brussels Museum. Photo: author.

these would be moved to a more convenient spot to allow for even more votive gifts and the earlier votives would be strung over beams and racks near the tomb or shrine.

Here is where the situation must have been rather tricky for clerics at Canterbury and other sacred sites. Pilgrims needed access to the tomb and to the shrine and both sites needed to appear to their best advantage, but the continual donations of votives would, inevitably, pile up. This necessitated some planning. Should they save every object and if so where and how should it be displayed? To allow uncontrolled growth of votives would eventually obscure the sacred encasement which the pilgrims came to see. Yet while sweeping away the donations and exhibiting a pristine vision of the tomb would make it a more official presentation, it would undermine the impact that piles of votives reflecting the power of the saint.

Fig. 2.5 St. Wolfgang Altarpiece (detail). 15th century, Germany. Photo: Telemann Braun.

The accumulation of near sacred tombs, shrines, and images was considered proof of a saint's miraculous powers. In a 1307 document written in support of the canonization of Thomas of Cantilupe, the clerics at Hereford Cathedral made sure to inventory at the saint's tomb 2,000 wax ex-votos in the shape of "…so many eyes, ears, an uncountable quantity of eyes, breasts, teeth, and ears." A few months later, pushing their case further, they counted another 100.[16] Similar accounts were gathered to support the canonization case of Peter of Luxembourg (d. 1387).

> Hardly had he been put in the ground, than the lower people began to place candles there, and certain one-armed people, the crippled and the lame, as well as various other sick people, had themselves carried near the cardinal…and gathered around his burial place…since the very day of his internment up to today there are so many people that you would say it was a consecration. Certainly, a hundredweight of candles (and more) are carried there each day, and there are already so many wax images that they exceed a thousand, of one sort or another.…[17]

Because of this, all through the high and later Middle Ages, clerics encouraged the donation of votives and devotees responded with enthusiasm. Even as the Reformation began to destroy shrines, the

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[16] Carole Rawcliffe, *Medicine & Society in Later Medieval England* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, reprint 1997), p. 23; Ronald Finucane, *Miracles and Pilgrims: Popular Beliefs in Medieval England* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995 repr.), p. 98.

[17] Francesco Datini writing in Avignon noted this. Jacques Chiffoleau, *La comtabilité de l'au-delB: les hommes, la mort et la religion dans la région d'Avignon B la fin du Moyen Age (vers 1320–vers 1480)* (Rome: Collection de l'École française de Rome 47, 1980) pp. 164–164; Swanson, pp. 153–154. At times, the offering of a wax votive image was used as proof of a miracle's occurrence or used to explain a detail of the story. When sailing through a fierce storm and trying to stabilize the ship, Eilwacher of Dover threw one anchor in after another, losing all three that he had. Frightened, he called on Becket to save him and his men. The storm calmed, but it took them three days of searching for dry land. Again Thomas was turned to: "Let's also promise to the martyr of Canterbury a wax anchor so that he will give us back our iron ones." Agreeing to this, they recommenced their search, discovered their lost anchors, and turned back to England to bring Becket their gift. This story told by Benedict is recounted by William who notes that if three anchors were lost, they should have offered to the tomb three waxen models so he postulates that only one anchor was actually lost. Benedict of Peterborough, *Miracula sancta Thome Cantuariensis* in *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. James C. Robertson (London: John Murray, 1876), vol. II, Book IV, chapter 45; Edwin A. Abbott, *St. Thomas of Canterbury, His Life and Miracles* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1898), vol. II, pp. 113–115. Note that hereafter Benedict's miracles will be cited in shortened form. He then goes through some logical contortions, positing multiple journeys to account for the discrepancy. William Book I, chapter 300–301; Abbott, vol. II, p. 117.

donation of votives continued. In 1538, a royal commissioner dismantling a sacred image at Caversham (near Reading) wrote that while standing before the statue of the Virgin preparing to take it down "there came in not so few as a dozen images of wax."[18]

Symbolism of Wax

The accounts of gifts offered at the tomb and shrines of saints (including Becket's) are careful to mention the numerous candles and objects composed of wax not only because of their popularity, but because of the intrinsic symbolism of the medium which was associated with the power of God to make and change the world. Thomas Aquinas, drawing on Aristotle and speculating on the nature of creation, wrote that "form is taken into the recipient 'without matter.'" He compared it to the imprint of a seal on wax, stating that it "takes a sign, i.e. as shape or image… sense receives the species of sensible things as wax receives an image."[19] Beyond its malleability, specific kinds wax was also valued for specific tactile and symbolic reasons. Most churches rejected tallow or wooden candles (stocks), preferring beeswax candles because they did not smell bad and because they reflected the widespread belief that the bees died while producing the fragrant wax, so the candles would recall Christ's sacrifice. That a saint demanded such an offering meant that the pilgrim would remember Christ's sacrifice and that their blessing (through the saint) was made possible by God's mercy.

Candles

Because of this, candles were the most popular votive gift, by far, presented at the tomb and shrine of Becket,[20] and the documents are

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[18] Finucane, p. 206; Lenz Kriss-Rettenbeck, *Ex-voto: Zeichen, Bild und Abbild im christlichen votivbrauchtum* (Zurich: Atlantis, 1972); Jean Lepage, *Ex-voto marins du Ponant offerts B Dieu et B ses Saints par les gens de la mer du Nord, de la Manche, et de l'Atlantique : [exposition], Nantes, Musée des arts décoratifs, nov. 1975–jan. 1976: Caen*, (Paris: Musées de la marine, 1975).

[19] Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's De Anima*, trans. Kenelm Foster and Silvester Humpfreys (Notre Dame: Dumb Ox Books, 1994), Lectio 24 on Book II, paras 553–554.

[20] The exchange of a candle for a blessing was at the heart of the interaction between the pilgrim and the saint. Reinhard Büll, *Das gross Buch vom Wachs; Geschicte, Kultur, Technik* (Munich: Callwey, 1977), vol. 2, pp. 895–1012.

replete with references to donated tapers. The light given off by the candle was also tied to the notion of Christ as a lamp unto the world and the illumination of God's grace throughout humanity, and with this in mind, devotees gifts supplied tremendous numbers of candles at the tomb and shrine of Becket. Eleanor of Provence (Henry III's wife) called for the help of Becket when pregnant with her son Edmund and in 1244, gave thanks to the saint by presenting 1,000 half-pound candles to the shrine. A less-extravagant example is that of Richard, a clerk of exchange at Canterbury, who gave 50 shillings in 1284 to have two candles burning continuously at the shrine "as other lights around the said shrine do."[21]

Money could be given to purchase specific kinds of candles such as the twelve large square candles on the beam above the shrine, while four more were situated on the shrine itself and another twelve candles (each weighing three pounds) and decorated with red and green stripes inserted with golden flowers and roses were set nearby.[22] These votive candles, whose placement was designed and controlled by the monks monitoring the shrine, made the spectacle of the shrine even more inviting to visiting pilgrims.

Pilgrims also brought their own candles to be offered, and, according to the miracle accounts, they were believed to offer almost immediate rewards for the devotee. For example, when Saxena of Dover's stomach and arm pain healed as she slept near the tomb, she had a vision of Thomas who ordered her to "Rise and offer thy candle." As soon as she had done so, she was so agile that she declared she could fly like a bird.[23] The power of the candle votive to sway Becket' compassion is seen in the story of a kind woman who took pity on the suffering daughter of Aylward of Canterbury. The daughter, spending two days in the Cathedral in shrieking fits, had nothing to offer Becket. The kindly woman took a lump of wax in her pocket and wrapped it around a thin thread and placed it on the tomb lit, whereupon the

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[21] In particular to celebrate the Feast of St. Thomas and St. Augustine. *Calendar of the Liberate Rolls preserved in the Public Record Office*. Eds. William Henry Stevenson and Cyril Thomas Flower (London: HMSO, 1916). vol. 2, p. 212. "Videlicet quemlibet de octo libris cere ardentes ibidem sicut alii faciunt circa feretrum." Canterbury Cathedral Archives, Reg. E, f. 143; Nilson. 137.

[22] "Maioris et quadrate form." *Customary of the Shrine of St. Thomas*, British Library, Add. MS 59616, f. 2. Similar candles survive (British Museum Medieval and Later Antiquities 1965, 4–3,1). John Cherry, "Candlestock," *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England*, eds. Jonathan Alexander and Paul Binski, (London: Royal Academy of the Arts, 1987), cat. 127–128, pp. 243–244.

[23] Benedict Book II, chapter 73; Abbott, vol. I, p. 266.

daughter was cured. At that moment a draft blew it out, but it was then rekindled without human aid and burned very quickly, so that "hardly any wax could be saved as a relic."[24]

A simple candle was effective, but many devotees wanted to make sure that their individual presence was sensed by the divinity through the donation of trindles or rotulas—coiled large candles made from lengthy wicks. Here personal interaction was crucial as the wicks, measured to the length of the afflicted person's body from fingertip to fingertip with the arms outstretched, or the circumference of the affected body part, became part of the candle. Such a large candle would be impractical to carry around, so most were coiled, which allowed small portions of the candle to be cut and used as needed. A stained glass window from Canterbury, dating 1213–1216, shows a woman offering trindle[25] such as that used at Becket's tomb by a woman who nearly died in childbirth. (fig. 2.6) She was cured after her nurse persuaded her husband to offer a candle as long and as wide as the lady's body.[26] The same balm was given to Matilda and Roger of London, who were poor, but managed to have a candle made in measure of their sick baby.[27] Smaller measures taken of injured limbs. Ethelburga, a local matron, was cured of shoulder pain when she gave to the tomb a candle the size of the thread that measured the length of her arm.[28] Measures of small children, and animals were also made into candles and presented at shrines and sacred spaces, such as places in Jerusalem, were also measured by pilgrims who used threads that were made into candles which could also act as relics. Measures were taken not just of length, but of weight, and some wealthy pilgrims donated candles whose heft matched their own body weight.

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[24] Benedict Book II, chapter 118; Abbott, vol. I, pp. 280–281. See also William, Book I, chapter 401; Abbott, vol. II, p. 43.

[25] This kind of imagery can also be found on two surviving pilgrim ampullae. See my article "Souvenirs and Trinity Chapel Windows at Canterbury Cathedral: An Exploration of Context, Copying, and the Recovery of Lost Stained Glass" in *Mirator* (September 2001). http://www.cc.jyu.fi/~mirator/pdf/Blick.pdf; Brian Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges* (London: Stationery Office, 1998), p. 50, fig. 6c.

[26] Benedict Book II, chapter 91; Abbott, vol. I, p. 271.

[27] Benedict Book II, chapter 94; Abbott, vol. I, p. 272. Babies and small children were saved by measuring them with a thread and promising to have a candle made of the same length. See also William of Canterbury. *Miracula sancta Thome Cantuariensis,* ed. James C. Robertson, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, vol. I (London: Rolls Series, 1876), Book II, chapters 226–227; Abbott, vol. I, p. 320. Hereafter William's accounts will be cited in shortened form.

[28] Benedict, Book II, chapter 64; Abbott, vol. I, p. 263.

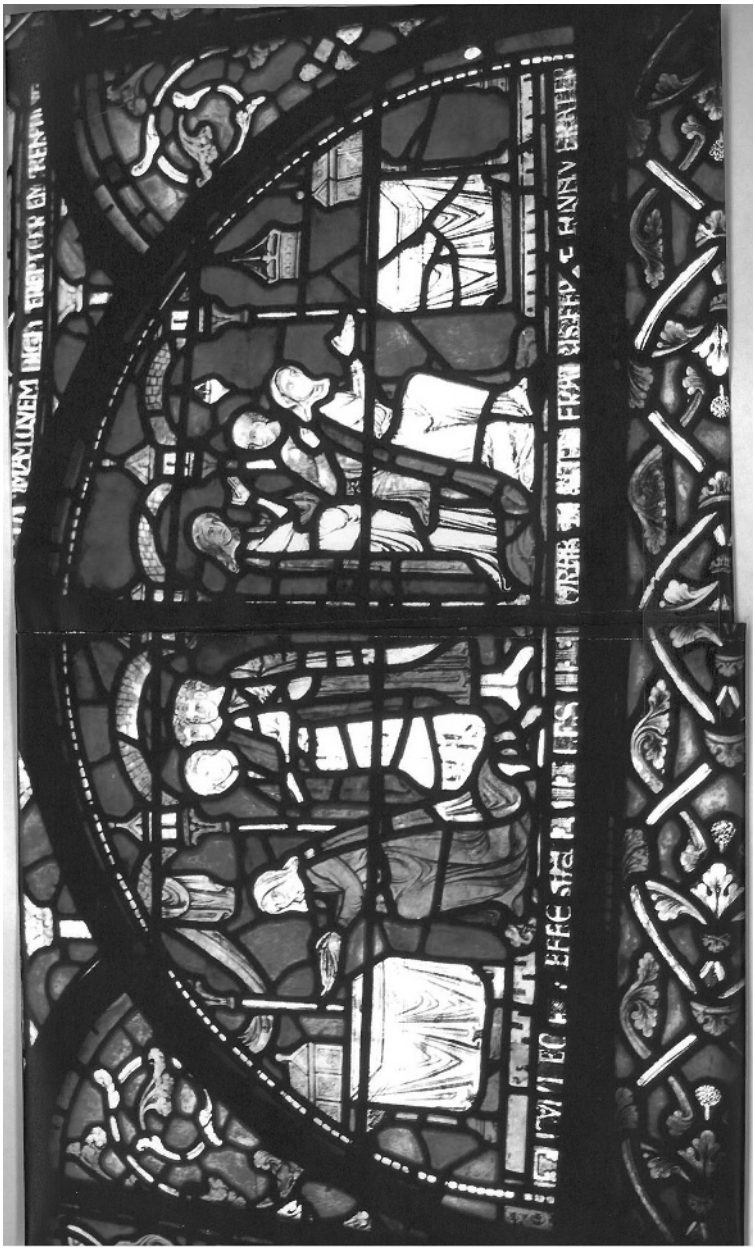

Fig. 2.6 Canterbury Stained Glass with pilgrim donating trindle on the right and praying before an altar (and early shrine?) with golden votive crown hanging above. Trinity Chapel, Canterbury Cathedral, 1213–1216. Photo: author.

Perhaps the most dramatic example of a measured candle was the votive gift to the shrine by the city of Dover. Every three years, beginning in 1220, the city donated an immense candle which stretched around a massive drum whose length was equal to the circumference of the town's walls in the belief that it would ensure Becket's protection.[29] A celebratory procession helped measure the walls and once the candle was made, it was wound around a reel. Four porters then carried the candle to the shrine where it was used to make candles for pauper funerals in the city of Canterbury.[30] From its conception, its making, its presentation, and charitable use, the candle was symbolic of Dover's continuing and physical devotion to the saint. Ultimately there was so much wax to contend with at Canterbury that a room at the east end of the presbytery was designated for this purpose, and became the Wax Chamber which housed candles and votive images.[31]

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[29] More commonly churches themselves were wrapped with chains, wax cords, or ropes. Called Umritt, this magical binding and ritualistic preserving was practiced in over 200 "chain churches" in Bavaria. Linked with St. Leonard, the legend grew that the church where the saint's relics resided was surrounded by a long iron chain to commemorate his compassion towards the imprisoned. As the type of chain employed was also commonly used for cattle and horses, the well-being of farm animals became associated with the chain. For example, on the feast days of St. Leonard and St. George, a crowd assembled at the Church of Leonard of Limoges in Bavaria. Priests would sprinkle horses and cattle with holy water then the peasants would ride or drive their colorfully-decorated animals into the church through an east-west axis set of doors where they would be exposed to the Eucharist itself or the view of it through monstrance windows. The animals were blessed to protect them from diseases and accidents. The chaining was also believed to protect pregnant women and to release prisoners. The chain itself was forged from the chains brought by freed prisoners. Other chain churches, such as St. Leonard's Chapel in Laupheim, featured a chain forged from horse-shoes given piously in thanks for the cure of pilgrims' horses or to gain luck for upcoming journeys. An altar dedicated to St. Leonard in Tölz is garlanded with an iron chain made from horseshoes. Chapel of St. Anne at Prat had wax cords and St. Leonard in Limousin had iron chains wrapped around it. E. Estyn Evans, *Irish Folk Ways* (London: Routledge, 1988 reprint of 1957), pp. 293, 298, 303; A. Goodrich-Freer, "The Powers of Evil in the Outer Hebrides," *Folk-Lore* 10 (1899), p. 268, (pp. 259–282); Lionel Rothkrug, "Popular Religion and Holy Shrines: Their Influence on the Origins of the German Reformation and their Role in German Cultural Development," in (ed.) James Obelkevich, *Religion and the People, 800–1700* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), pp. 30–31 (chapter 2). To ward off disease, city leaders in Barcelona in 1482 measured their city walls and burned the candle made from the long wick in five-foot lengths, while in Flanders at Nieuport in 1489, to withstand a siege, the length of the fortified defenses were measured and burned in honor of the Virgin.

[30] D. Turner, pp. 17, 19. Sweetinburgh, Sheila. "Wax, Stone and Iron: Dover's Town Defenses in the late Middle Ages," *Archaeologia Cantiana* Vol. 124 (2004), pp. 183–208.

[31] M.F. Hearn, "Canterbury Cathedral and the Cult of Becket" *Art Bulletin* 76 (March, 1994), pp. 31–33.

Votive Images/Votive Image Magic

Wax, with its endlessly malleability and relative low-cost, was crucial for other votives which grounded the interactive experience. The votive images, modeled from wax, were produced from it in all shapes and sizes and presented at Becket's tomb and shrine. Most popular were body parts, but also molded were animals, birds, wagons, anchors, and ships also filled the tomb and shrine precinct.[32] For example, a Canon from St. Frideswide's in Oxford who gave two wax legs the same size as his own to the tomb was rewarded with the healing of both legs,[33] while Emeline from Wales who formed a wax eye and inscribed it with a cross made of Becket's name, found her sight restored.[34] Animal curatives were also sought as when Cecilia purchased a pound of wax near the tomb, and then fashioned seven candles for herself, her husband, and their sick animals.[35] Votive images were also employed by devotees who could not make the journey themselves. In 1443, Margaret Paston sent her sick husband a costly "ymmage of wax" as a surrogate for himself to be presented to the shrine of Our Lady of Undercroft at Canterbury Cathedral.

Ships and anchors and other votives that less affluent devotees gave in wax form were rendered in precious metals and mounted on or near the shrine by royalty, reflecting the same beliefs, but presenting it in a much more lavish fashion. For example, Edward I "…adorned [the shrine] admirably with four images and two ships of pure gold, and especially with brooches and invaluable things of gold and ornate precious stones."[36] Two of these ships are presumably pictured on the

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[32] One interesting figure noted by Finucane was a wax man hanging from a gallows given to St. Thomas of Cantilupe in thanks for the pilgrim's rescue. "Furcas cereas cumymagine hominis cerea in eisdem furcas suspensa" MS Vat Lat 4015, f 9v.9, the *Life and Miracles of St. Thomas Cantilupe, Bishop of Hereford*; Finucane, p. 97.

[33] Benedict Book II, chapters 96–97; Abbott, vol. I, p. 273.

[34] Benedict Book II, chapter 140; Abbott, vol. I, p. 287.

[35] William Book I, chapter 311; Abbott, vol. II, p. 29. In 1286 a Pisan man willed money to make a wax image of himself that was to be placed in a church near Marseilles. Swanson, p. 168. *Paston Letters and Papers of the Fifteenth Century*, (ed.) Norman Davis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971–1976), vol. I, p. 218; Rawcliffe, p. 178.

[36] Quatuor imaginibus & duabus navibus de puro auro, ac etiam firmaculis et inestimabilibus aureis et lapidibus preciosis ornatis…egregie decoravit. British Library Lansdown MS; Woodruff, "Financial Aspects," p. 29.

top of shrine pilgrim badges flanking a jeweled cross.[37] (fig. 2.7) That highly educated and wealthy pilgrims such as sovereigns participated in this ritual reflects a long-standing belief of the effect of an image on the original.

Image Magic

The votive images pointed out the specific need of the devotee to the divinity or they reflected the specific blessing given to the worshipper, but beyond that, they were believed to hold an intrinsic power caused by their being shaped like the original. Symbol and symbolized were considered to have an effect on one another because they participated in the same substance,[38] being considered Aessentially archetypes" which could share the same kinds of power.[39] The votive image not only interacted with the original by looking like it, but by arranging for a space where reciprocity between the devotee and the individual holy personage could occur.[40]

Such image magic had a long history. In the earliest civilizations, people made and used images of wax, wood, and metal which could be burned, pierced, crumbled, plunged in water or buried in order to

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[37] Later, in 1343, Edward III gave gold ships to a number of major shrines including that of Becket in gratitude for a surviving a difficult sea crossing. He also gave golden ships to Walsingham, St. Paul's Cathedral, Gloucester, and another one to Canterbury for the Our Lady of Undercroft Chapel. PRO E36/204, fol. 73r; W.M. Ormrod, "The Personal Religion of Edward III," *Speculum* 64 (1989), p. 860.

[38] Louise M. Bishop, *Words, Stones, Herbs: The Healing Word in Medieval and Early Modern England* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2007), p. 67.

[39] Simon Roffey, "Devotional Objects and Cultural Context: The Medieval Parish Church" in (ed.) Virginia Raguin, *Catholic Collecting: Catholic Reflection 1538–1850, Objects as a Measure of Reflection on a Catholic Past and the Construction of Recusant Identity in England and America* (Worcester, MA: College of the Holy Cross, 2006), p. 27.

[40] Hans Belting, *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages: Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion*, translated by Mark Bartusis and Raymond Meyer (New Rochelle, NY: Aristide D. Caratzas Publisher, 1990), p. 57; A. Neumeyer, *Der Blick aus dem Bilde* (Berlin, 1964), p. 29ff. This is similar to the Hindu notion of *darhsan*. The saint could see the votive image and when it was depicted by an image itself could produce an "exchange of gazes." Hans Belting, *The Image and Its Public in the Middle Ages: Form and Function of Early Paintings of the Passion*, translated by Mark Bartusis and Raymond Meyer (New Rochelle, NY: Aristide D. Caratzas Publisher, 1990), p. 57. Numerous accounts tell of the interaction visually with the image looking out towards them with compassion.

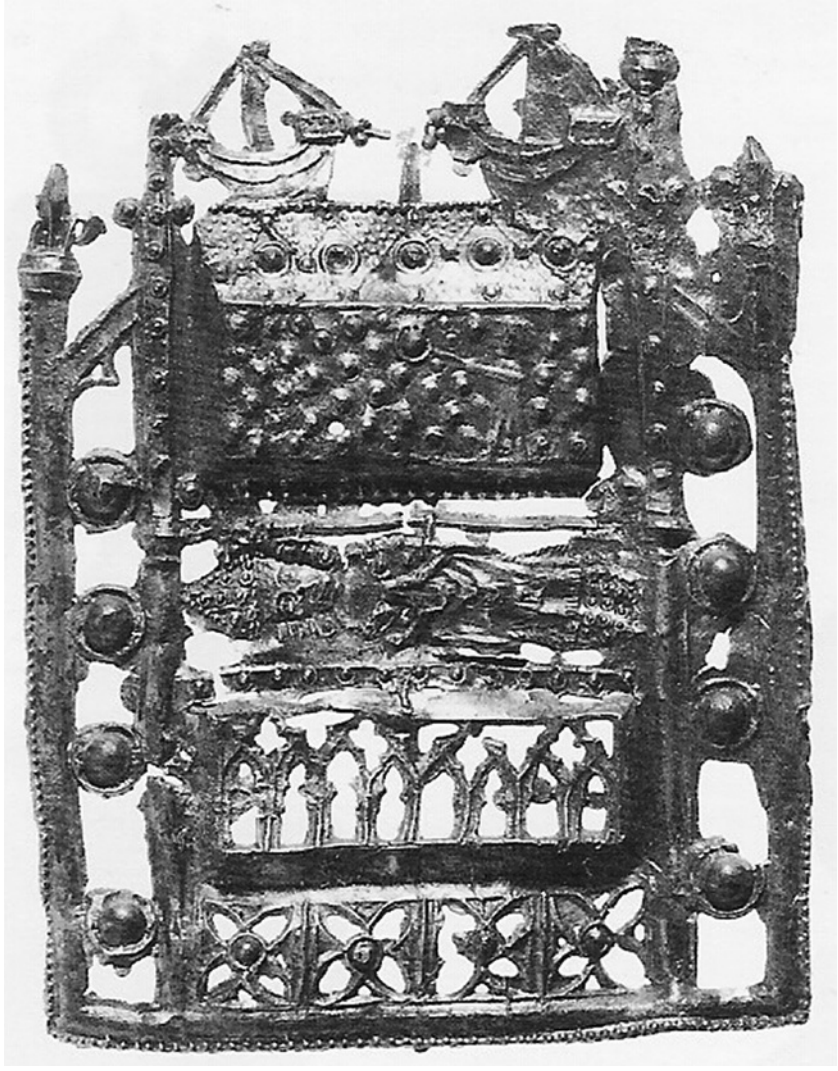

Fig. 2.7 Pilgrim Badge of Shrine of St. Thomas Becket, Canterbury Cathedral, 14th century. Photo: Museum of London.

try to control other people and events.[41] They could be used to cause suffering or to make someone fall in love, but mostly they were used for protection and for healing. Many leaders in the medieval Church held ambivalent views regarding this practice. Often it was roundly condemned (including by clerics associated with Canterbury). For instance, Giraldus Cambrensis (d. *c.* 1220) railed against priests who undermined the sacrament of the altar by "celebrating masses over images of wax in order to curse some person."[42] Yet even the most scholarly and erudite clergy, such as John of Salisbury,[43] believed in the efficacy of image magic although they wholly disapproved it. Image magic, though, under the right circumstances was widely accepted and praised in fiction and in real life. The physician in the *Canterbury Tales*, used "magyk natureel" to make "ymages" and charms for his patients,[44] and William Stapleton, a monk in Norfolk, wrote to Cardinal Wolsey, telling him in 1528 that in order to cure the duke of Norfolk, he created "an image of wax" in "similitude" to the duke.[45]

During the later Middle Ages instead of remote, celestial beings, the saints came to play roles more closely related to the everyday concerns of the faithful. They acted as their personal intercessors and helpers, in return for which, through their images, they received prayers and offerings."[46] Because it was an image of the devotee it contained

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[41] For a lengthy (though dated) bibliography on image magic see, George Lyman Kittredge, *Witchcraft in Old and New England* (Cambridge, MA, 1929), pp. 412–414; David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1989), chapters 8 and 10; Joseph Hansen, *Quellen und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Hexenwahns un der Hexenverfolgung im Mittelalter* (Bonn: Carl Giorgi, 1901), doc. 22, pp. 14–15.

[42] Geraldus Cambrensis, *Gemma Ecclesiastica*, I, 49 in *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, ed. J.S. Brewer (Nendeln: Kraus Repr., 1964–1966 of Rolls Series), vol. II, p. 137.

[43] John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, vol. I, p. 12 in *Ioannis Saresberiensis episcopi Carnotensis Policratici sive De nvgis cvrialivm et vestigiis philosophorvm libri VIII. Recognovit et prolegomenis, apparatv critico, commentario, indicibvs instrvxit Clemens* C. I. Webb, ed. Clement Charles Webb (Oxonnii: E Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1909), I, pp. 51–52.

[44] Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, Prologue, A 417–418. Huling E. Ussery, *Chaucer's Physician: Medicine and Literature in Fourteenth-Century England* (New Orleans: Tulane, 1971), p. 112; Geoffrey Chaucer, *Works of Geoffrey Chaucer*, ed. F.N. Robinson (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 21.

[45] This was near Cologne. K.M. Briggs, *The Anatomy of Puck: An Examination of Fairy Beliefs among Shakespeare's Contemporaries and Successors* (London: Routledge, 1959), p. 260.

[46] Richard Marks, *Image and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2004), p. 86; Andre Vauchez, *Sainthood*, p. 476.

something of the essence of its original model.[47] By presenting the saint with an image of oneself, one's farm animal, or one's injury it stood as a solid and long-lasting reminder to the saint of their obligation and the thanks they received in return for honoring the requests of their devotees.

Royal votive figures

Because of this, sovereigns often donated regal sculptural images made of precious materials.[48] Beyond the intrinsic powers associated with gems, gold, and silver, these images (presumably) were idealized, but identifiable, figures of the devotees, while cheaper wax images were more generalized. Instead of being draped over a beam with hundreds of similar wax figures, these were likely given places of honor on columns near shrines as seen in an illustration of votive figures near the shrine of St. Edward the Confessor (*c.* 1255–1260) (fig. 2.8) and on the pilgrim badges made to honor Becket's shrine, where a small figure in long robes points to a jewel.[49] (fig. 2.7) Those which presumably took

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[47] Laura D. Gelfand and Walter S. Gibson, "Surrogate Selves: The Rolin Madonna and the Late-Medieval Devotional Portrait," *Simiolus* (2003) 29/3, 4, p. 134.

[48] Joan Evans, *Magical Jewels of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Particularly in England* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1922). Henry III gave three golden images to the shrine in 1243, paying 250 marks for them. *Calendar of the Liberate Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, Henry III (A.D. 1240–1245)*, ed. and trans. J.B.W. Chapman (London: Stationery Office, 1930), vol. 2, p. 196; Nilson, p. 39. For information on donor images and their functions, see. Gelfand and Walter S. Gibson, "Surrogate Selves," 4, pp. 119–138.

[49] Cambridge University Library, Ee. 3.5.9, f. 30; Nigel Morgan, "Life of St. Edward the Confessor," in *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England*, eds. Jonathan Alexander and Paul Binski, (London: Royal Academy of the Arts, 1987), pp. 216–217, fig. 125. Crests also supported votive figures. Henry VII donated to the shrine at Westminster an armored figure of himself, made of wood covered in gold with enamelwork on a silver gilt base. This image was to be placed "upon and in the midst of the crest of the shrine of St. Edward King, in such place as our executors shall think most convenient and honorable." Jocelyn Perkins, *Westminster Abbey; Its Worship and Its Ornaments* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938) vol. 2, p. 58. Sometimes the wings are attached to figure on the pilgrim badge, changing it into an angel. Brian Spencer, *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges: Salisbury Museum Medieval Catalogue* (Salisbury: Salisbury Museum, 1990), p. 23, but the majority of badges discovered show the tiny figure without wings. The figure appears as an angel in a fragment discovered on the foreshore at Billingsgate in 1985, fig. 74 b in above and in an example in the British Museum published by Tait 1976, fig. 365b). *Pilgrim Souvenirs and Secular Badges: medieval Finds from Excavations in London*. London: Stationery Office, 1998, p. 101. The appearance of an angel on the Billingsgate badge is in conjunction with

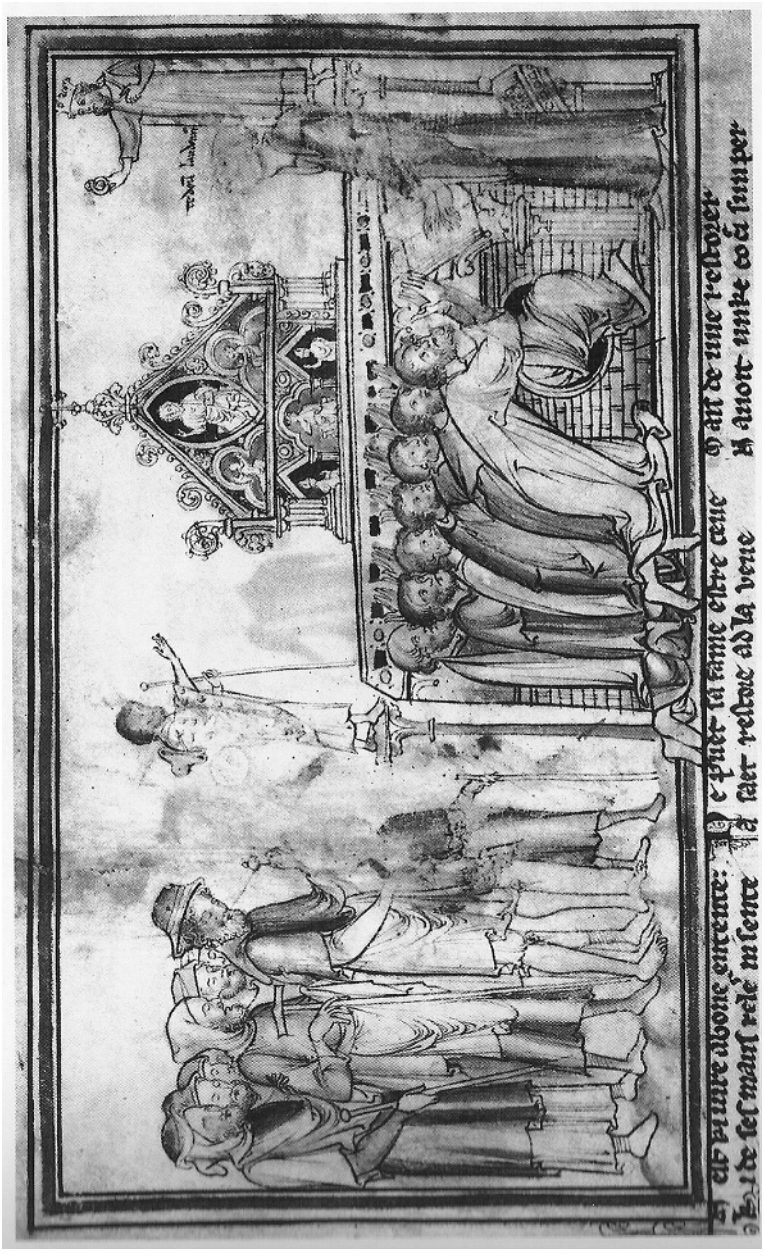

Fig. 2.8 Shrine of St. Edward the Confessor. Note two votive figures on pedestals. The Life of St. Edward the Confessor, Cambridge University Library, Ee. 3.59, f. After: *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England 1200–1400* (London: Royal Academy of Art, 1987), fig. 125, p. 205.

up positions near Becket's shrine included gold statues of Edward the Confessor, a pilgrim (probably St. John the Evangelist in disguise), and St. George and his horse, all displayed with pinnacles above them given by Edward I,[50] a golden head, ornamented with pearls and precious stones costing Henry V £160,[51] and a life-size kneeling figure of Henry VII whose will instructed that it should be "put as nigh to the shrine as may well be."[52] Although no documents survive specifying where exactly the figures were located, their placement must have influenced their reception, and as shrines and altars were monitored by clergy who received donations, assisted pilgrims, and watched over valuables, no one could easily place a votive without their permission. The continued presence of a votive on a shrine reflected that church's approval of the gift.

Donor figures traditionally illustrated not only the social status and wealth of those depicted it emphasized their generosity and devotion to the divinity featured in the center of the artwork.[53] The figures also acted as surrogate selves entreating the onlookers to pray for them in order to lessen their time in Purgatory[54] and for showing their eternal gratitude to the saint, always at attention, always showing their prayerful devotion.[55] Plus to an audience used to seeing companies of saints surrounding the most sacred images/personages, it would not

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other unusual details, in that it also adds heraldic shields to the shrine's feretory. The figure without wings is shown occasionally shown kneeling, as in a fragment of the shrine badge in the British Museum, (Medieval & Later 1971.6–3.5).

A Northern German painted altarpiece, dating to the late fifteenth century, depicts King Louis VII at the tomb of St. Thomas Becket. Above a fanciful rendition of the tomb (conflated with the shrine) is a tiny flying angel tapping the central jewel with a wand. See Tancred Borenius, Some Further Aspects of the Iconography of St. Thomas of Canterbury," *Archaeologia* volume LXXXIII (1933), p. 172, pl. XLVII.

[50] This cost 347 pounds. British Library MS 636, f. 219d and Public Record Office E101/372/11, m.3. See also Taylor, (1979), pp. 23–25; Spencer (1998), p. 100; Sarah Blick, "Reconstructing the Shrine," pp. 411–412, n. 25.

[51] From Issue Roll, Easter, 1 Henry VI; *Issues of the Exchequer from King Henry III to King Henry VI*, ed. Frederick Devon (London: John Murray, 1837), pp. 321–322.

[52] Barrie Dobson, "The Monks of Canterbury in the Later Middle Ages, 1220–1540" in *A History of Canterbury Cathedral*, eds. P. Collinson, Nigel Ramsey, Margaret Sparks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 137. He previously gifted Walsingham with a similar portrait votive image. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, p. 139; *The Will of King Henry VII*, ed. T. Astle (London: T. Payne, 1775), p. 37.

[53] *'A Hundred Merry Tales' and other English Jestbooks of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, ed. Paul M. Zall (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1963), p. 336, no. 10.

[54] Gelfand and Gibson, pp. 124–125.

[55] In 1389, Charles VI of France donated a wax bust of himself before Peter of Luxembourg to pray for divine intervention. Gelfand and Gibson, p. 133.

be out of place if a devotee were to mistake these pedestal votive figures for saints for they appeared to engage in a *sacra conversatione* as they lined up, flanking the shrine. (fig. 2.8) With their pedestals and encrusted canopies they also resembled jamb figures regularly seen on church entrances. The presence of these figures encouraged other pilgrims, such as Margery Kempe, to see themselves in the role of the donor, who imagined herself kneeling before Christ and speaking to him as a patron.[56]

Other Votives at Becket's Tomb and Shrine

These sparkling figures and flickering candles offered at Becket's tomb and shrine were joined by even more physical or even bodily ex-votos. Crutches and splints adorned the areas around these monuments, forming a large portion of the visible proof of Becket's power—each one representing the personal intervention of the saint with a particular devotee—and promising similar succor to the new onlooker. For example, William, an elderly knight from near Canterbury, suffered from paralysis of the legs. Hobbling to the tomb on his crutch, he prayed to Thomas, was cured, and left his crutch behind as proof of his healing.[57] For the healing of the daughter of Radulph the Fleming's broken leg a silver splint was offered at the tomb.[58]

More personally (and intestinally), a sick Agnes, after drinking the Canterbury Water, vomited a four-foot worm, felt much better, and left it gratefully at the tomb.[59] Other objects, such as cherry stones or fish bones which blocked throats, were either offered up to the church or taken home by the lucky pilgrim despite badgering from the monks who wished to keep these signs of the saint's healing powers.[60] A more

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[56] Sarah Stanbury, *The Visual Object of Desire in Late Medieval England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), p. 16. In the family chapel at Toldeo Cathedral Alvaro de Luna's (d. 1453) family were represented by life-size bronzes which were raised and lowered into prayerful positions towards the mass being performed at the high altar. Gelfand & Gibson, p. 135.

[57] Benedict Book II, chapter 73; Abbott, vol. I, p. 266.

[58] Benedict Book II, chapter 150; Abbott, vol. I, p. 291.

[59] Benedict notes that it was placed in an upper window on display, but it had since disappeared. Abbott, vol. I, p. 265; Benedict Book II, chapter 68. Another worm offered up after being vomited by a boy was half a cubit long. It was subsequently hung up in the church. See also Benedict Book III, chapter 105; Abbott, vol. I, pp. 274–75.

[60] Benedict Book II, chapter 107; Abbott, vol. I, pp. 275–76.

appetizing offering was that of a gander in honor of a flock of geese whose honking awoke a man whose body was already laid out for a funeral. The fowl instead of being kept near the tomb was "welcomed and eaten."[61]

Other even more ephemeral votive gifts were offered, including flowers, incense, and music to the tomb, shrine, and sacred images in Canterbury. In 1296–1297, Henry III donated "£4 8s. 4d., by the gift of the King to 14 minstrels, maing their minstrelsy before the statue of the Blessed Mary, the Virgin, in the crypt (*vouta*) of Christchurch, Canterbury."[62] In 1332–1333, Edward III paid 2 shillings to "divers minstrels for making their minstrelies before the statue of the Blessed Virgin, in the *volta* in Christchurch, Canterbury" and in 1337 he again gave 2 shillings for "divers minstrels who made minstrelsy before the Image of our Lady in the Vault."[63] The gift could be enjoyed by all onlookers making their vision of the images and the shrines even more evocative.

Gems/Crowns at the tomb and shrine

While the majority of votives were of an ephemeral nature and could be melted down or even eaten, at the other end of the spectrum were jewels, gold pieces, and crowns which brought much prestige to the cult, so the monks were loathe to destroy them. On the contrary, such gifts required a place of honor.[64] Because the tomb was kept bare, it

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[61] William, Book I, chapter 359; Abbott, vol. II, p. 35.

[62] 115 British Library, Add. MSS. 7965 f. 55v; Constance Bullock-Davies, *Register of Royal and Baronial Domestic Minstrels 1272–1327* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1986), p. 117. Playing music before holy images was a wide-spread practice. A record from the church of St. Martin in Wezemaal, Belgium, tells of three pipers who played be fore the statue of Job. Marike de Kroon, "Medieval Pilgrim Badges and their Iconographic Aspects," in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, eds. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe (Leiden: Brill Academic Press, 2005), p. 390, n. 14. Queen Philippa also paid minstrels to accompany the great cross in St. Paul's in 1331. Richard Rastall, "Minstrelsy, Church and Clergy in Medieval England," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* vol. 97 (1970–1971), p. 87 (83–98).

[63] MS E101/386/7 f. 7r, Exchequer account in the Public Record Office; Cotton MS *Nero C* VIII, fol. 212.

[64] These included the gift of gold pieces by King Henry II on April 21, 1177 and the two walrus tusks given by Rafn Sveinbjarnarson, an Icelandic chief, on his visit before 1200. Gervase of Canterbury, *The Historical works of Gervase of Canterbury*, ed. William Stubbs (London: Longman & Co., 1870–80), p. 509; Eiríkr Magnússon,

is unlikely that these votives were tossed into a cabinet, but neither could they be draped easily over a rack or beam. There is some evidence that their fate was to adorn an early altar or shrine placed near the tomb. A number of images connected to Canterbury from the late 12th-early 13th centuries including manuscripts,[65] stained glass,[66] and pilgrim ampullae that depict a gabled shrine-like structure on thin pillars might indicate what it looked like. (fig. 2.9) A panel of Canterbury stained glass from 1213–1216 may show the early shrine in its golden glory and the interaction of a pilgrim with votive images. (fig. 2.6) On the left at the bottom right, a woman kneels at the cloth-covered altar now attached to a house-shaped reliquary resting on a slab.

So crucial were such ex-votos that when the new shrine was created, they were decorated entirely with sumptuous votive gifts from high-level clergy and sovereigns affixed directly to the golden feretory.[67] That is, its very existence spoke to pilgrim interaction and devotion. This differs dramatically from continental shrines which, while they were also adorned with votive gifts, were dominated by significant iconographic programs devoted to the saint.[68] The votives become the focus of devotion if the pilgrim accounts and the image of what the shrine might have looked like can be seen in fourteenth-century pilgrim badges are to be believed. These badges illustrate ball-like, un-faceted gems covering the gabled feretory.[69] On the top portion, large jewels are placed

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Thómas Saga Erkibyskups: A Life of Archbishop Thomas Becket (London: Longman & Co., 1883), p. 407; *Sturlunga saga, including the Islendinga saga of lawman Sturla Thordsson and other works*, ed. Gudbrand Vigfusson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1878), vol. 2, p. 277.

[65] An illumination, made in Canterbury in 1180, was placed immediately before the letter describing the martyrdom. John of Salisbury, *Life of St. Thomas Becket; Letters of St. Thomas Becket*, London, British Library, MS Cotton Claudius B.II, f 314r. The manuscript measures 328 x 215 mm. C. Michael Kauffman in *English Romanesque Art 1066–1200*, eds. George Zarnecki, Janet Holt, and Tristam Holland (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984), p. 126, cat. 72. See also http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/onlineex/illmanus/cottmanucoll/t/011cotclab00002u00341000.html.

[66] In Trinity Chapel near the shrine are two windows showing the same gabled, pillared edifice. Window S:VII; www2.art.utah.edu/cathedral/can_trin_miracle.htm.

[67] The gold-plated shrine at Canterbury was exceptional. Matthew Paris, *Matthaei Perisiensis, Monachi Sancta Albani, Chronica Majora*, ed. Henry R. Luard (London: Rolls, 1877), 4, pp. 156–157; Nilson, p. 37.

[68] For instance, see Benoît Van den Bossche, "The Iconography of the Rheno-Mosan Châsses of the Thirteenth-Century" in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles,* eds. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 649–667.

[69] Shrines covered with silver plate with jewels attached were the norm for great shrines. The shrines of Canterbury and St. Edward the Confessor seem to have been the

Fig. 2.9 Canterbury Pilgrim Ampullae depicting the early shrine, mid-13th century. Collection of H.J.E. van Beuningen. Photo: after *Heilig en Profaan 2: 1200 Laatmiddeleeuwse Insigne suit openbare en particuliere collectives* (Cothen: Stichting Middeleeuwse Religieuze en Profane Insignes, 2001), p. 302.

within a trellis-work of lozenge forms.[70] Upon what would have been the gold plate ground, jewels are massed in no particular order.[71]

For instance, pontifical and profession rings adorned the surface as stated in Archbishop Walter Reynolds' 1327 will which instructs that rings he bequeathed (including his pontifical ring) "be fixed to the shrine of the glorious martyr aforesaid [Thomas] between the other jewels which I bought and gave over to the same shrine in times gone by," while in 1441 the widow Joan Denys willed her profession ring (*anulum de professione mea*) to the shrine of St. Thomas.[72]

As impressive as these were, gifts from royalty dominated the shrine. In 1244, Henry II paid £24 9s. ½ d. to William Hardel, keeper of the mint, to "make a golden garland (*garlendechain*)… to place at the head of the shrine over the altar-table of St. Thomas the martyr at Canterbury where there is a defect."[73] In 1251, Henry III sent gold

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only ones completely plated with gold. Matthew Paris, *Matthaei Perisiensis, Monachi Sancta Albani, Chronica Majora*, ed. Henry R. Luard (London: Rolls Series, 1877), vol. 4, pp. 156–7; Nilson, p. 37. One legend associated with the shrine at Canterbury was that the common people, who when they heard the archbishop state that he would use the donations of pilgrims to build a feretrum, demanded that the structure be made of gold alone. *Thómas Saga Erkibyskups*, p. 213. Spencer (1998), p. 99. The shape of feretra was based on the notion of a coffin. Usually, the lid was removable as was a coffin's, but in use, the lids were kept shut to guard against pilferage of the relics. Nilson, p. 35. Erasmus mentions that people were not allowed to see Becket's bones. Erasmus, *Pilgrimages to Saint Mary of Walsingham and Saint Thomas of Canterbury*, p. 49.

[70] Spencer (1998), p. 99. The badges also illustrate an image of a recumbent Becket, though it is difficult to discern if it copied an actual effigy or if it was symbolic of Becket's presence.

[71] Spencer (1998), p. 101. This is mentioned in a Ventian account in *A Relation, or Rather a True Account, of the Island of England*, ed. Charlotte A. Sneyd (Camden Society, vol. 37, 1847), p. 30; *Three Books of Polydore Vergil's English History, Comprising the Reigns of Henry VI, Edward IV, and Richard III. From an Early Translation, Preserved among the MSS. Of the Old Royal Library in the British Museum*, ed. Henry Ellis (London: Camden Society, 1844), p. 30; *English Historical Documents 1485–1558*, ed. C.H. Williams (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1967), p. 198. Valuable votives were sometimes detached from the shrine. In 1372, Prior Gillingham melted down images and plate from the shrine to raise money, but this was far from the norm as the prestige from displaying such gifts by the shrine was expected to bring in more gifts over the years. "Item recept' per manus Ricardi prioris cli de diversis ymaginibus feretri beati Thome martyris fucis venditis." C. Eveleigh Woodruff, "The Financial Aspect of the Cult of St. Thomas of Canterbury as Revealed by a Study of the Monastic Records," *Archaeologia Cantiana* 44 (1932), p. 21, n. 2.

[72] Ed. C.E. Woodruff, *Sede Vacante Wills: A Calendar of Wills Proved before the Commissary of the Prior and Chapter of Christ Church Canterbury, during Vacancies in the Primacy* (Kent: Kent Archaeological Society Records Branch), vol. 3, p. 68; C.E. Woodruff, "Some Early Kentish Wills," Archaeologia Cantiana vol. 46 (1934), p. 34.

[73] Roll No. 20, *Calendar of the Liberate Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, Henry III (A.D. 1240–1245)*, ed. and transl. J.B.W. Chapman, 2 (London: Stationery

coins to be attached to the shrine; although gold coins were not used as currency in England in the mid-thirteenth century, they were used as a commodity and were associated with "prestigious alms-giving" by kings.[74] (Some of these coins might have been borrowed briefly, as when Margaret of France—wife of Edward I—asked for Becket's help by having coins, which had been laid on the shrine, be laid on her belly while giving birth.)[75] Henry III later wrote in 1254 from Gascony asking that the officials at Westminster should arrange that he have "some other befitting jewels which he could offer on his arrival at Canterbury in reverence of the blessed martyr Thomas."[76] In 1360, when King John of France was a royal hostage, he visited Becket's shrine and donated a gem valued at an incredible £25.[77]

Office, 1930), vol. 2. p. 196. The altar at "the head" meant that it met with the saint's head, "since the head of a corpse was always laid to the west." Robert Willis, *Architectural History of Some English Cathedrals: A Collection in two parts of Papers delivered during the years 1842–1863*, I (Chicheley: Paul P.B. Minet, 1972) p. 100.

[74] *Liberate Rolls*, 3, p. 1251; Peter Spufford, *Money and Its Use in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), p. 183. It is hard to determine that the giving of alms by sovereigns truly indicates their personal interest and devotion. Kings employed an almoner whose job it was to distribute alms for the king and keep records of these donations. For the wealthy in the Middle Ages, this generosity was expected and was made "as much part of daily ceremony as eating or sleeping." Hilda Johnstone, "Poor-relief in the Royal Households of Thirteenth-Century England," *Speculum*, VI (1929), p. 150; Arnold Taylor, "Royal Alms and Oblations in the Later Thirteenth Century," in *Tribute to an Antiquary: Essays Presented to Mark Fitch*, (eds.) F.G. Emmison and Roy Stephens (London: Leopard's Head Press, 1976), pp. 93–125. Wardrobe accounts give the impression that the giving of alms was routine and engaged the kings only to a minimal extent, but the alms were distinguished: those given to the poor or sick and those given to shrines and religious houses. Christopher Given-Wilson, *The Royal Household and the King's Affinity: Service, Politics, and Finance in England 1360–1413* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 69.The latter reflected the belief that the king was "the supreme patron of the churches in his realm… In laying his offerings on the altar of St. Alban or St. Edmund, St. Thomas… he was not merely doing what was expected of him and enlisting the goodwill of the saints, but also setting a good example to his subjects great and small." Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, p. 112.

[75] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*. ed. William Rishangeri. (London: Richardus Hodgkinson and Miles Flesher, 1641), p. 348; Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, p. 129.

[76] Letter from Henry III, Calendars of Close Rolls, 1254–1255 in Close rolls of the reign of Henry III, preserved in the Public Record Office. A.D. 1227–[1272], Eds. H.C. Maxwell Lyte and Alfred Stamp (London: HMSO, 1902–1938), p. 275.

[77] Frank Barlow, *Edward the Confessor* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), p. 168; Louis Douet d'Arcq, *Comptes de l'argenterie des rois de France au XIV siécle* (Paris: SHF, 1851), pp. 270–74; John of Reading, *Chronica Johannis de Reading et Anonymi Cantuarensis 1346–1367*, ed. James Tait (Manchester: University Press, 1914), p. 209.

By far the most celebrated votive on the shrine was the large ruby, called the *regale*, given by Louis VII in 1179 (given on the first foreign state visit to Becket's tomb) and transferred to the shrine in 1220.[78] Visitors repeatedly commented on the immense, priceless jewel and its rich color and it is featured in pilgrim badges commemorating the shrine.[79] (fig. 2.7) A golden rosary, given by Canterbury plumber John

[78] Accounts of Louis VII's visit can be found in a number of sources. *Chronicon Vulgo Dictum Chronicon Thomae Wykes* in *Annales Monastici*, ed. Henry Luard (London: Rolls Series, 1869) 4, pp. 38–39; *Chronica Johannis de Oxenedes*, ed. Henry Ellis (London: Rolls Series, 1859), p. 68; Nilson, p. 117. The *Thómas Saga Erikibyskups*, I, pp. 475–481, II, pp. 213–223 notes that the regal was first discovered in Jerusalem by "some hunting folk" who sold it to Charlemagne. The gem had grown on the forehead of a unicorn underneath its horn, and when it shed its horn, the jewel was shed as well. Charlemagne had it set in gold and thereafter it was used as a coronation ring. Many years later, Becket visited Louis VII and requested that he be given the ring. The king demurred, and Becket accepted his plea, but mentioned that he would get the stone, "though it may be later." (I, p. 479) The king's son became ill and the king, remembering Becket's request, vowed to take the stone to Canterbury. His son was instantly cured. As time passed, the king regretted his vow and decided to offer instead double the price of the stone, which the archbishop (Richard of Dover) welcomed. When the king went to pay respects to the shrine, the stone was torn magnetically from his ring and attached itself to the shrine, secured "…[with a] gold-fitting enclos[ing] the edge of the circular basis all round." (II, p. 221) The king then donated the stone and begged the monks to keep the money as well.

A similar story is told by Tetzel in Malcolm Letts, *The travels of Leo of Rozmital through Germany, Flanders, England, France, Spain, Portugal, and Italy, 1465–1467* (Cambridge: Published for the Hakluyt Society at the University Press, 1957), pp. 43–44. King Louis VII visited Canterbury to fulfill a vow made on the battlefield. As he knelt at the shrine and prayed, the bishop of the Cathedral noticed the ring on his hand which held the regal. He begged the King to give the ring to the shrine. The King replied that he could not, as he believed that whatever he undertook would not miscarry so long as he had the ring on his finger. Instead, he offered 100,000 florins, which the Bishop accepted. But no sooner had the offer been made, the stone sprang from the ring and embedded itself in the shrine as if it had been placed there by a goldsmith. The King prayed to St. Thomas and to the Bishop that his sin might be forgiven, whereupon he presented the 100,000 florins to the shrine as well. Letts notes that this story has no documentary confirmation and was probably the invention of a guide, p. 43, n. 2.

[79] Schaseck stated that, "Among other priceless things there is to be seen in it a carbuncle which shines at night and which is half the size of a hen's egg." Letts, *Travels*, pp. 50–51. Erasmus referred to it as the size of a goose egg, while Madame de Montreuil stated that it was the size of a man's thumbnail in letter written by William Penison to Thomas Cromwell. *State Papers of King Henry VIII, 1509–1547*, ed. Robert Peel (London: PRO, 1831), vol. 1, p. 583. Spencer (1998), p. 101. "No one knows what the stone is. It has a clear glistening brilliance and burns with such a brilliant light that no one can bear to examine it closely, so as to distinguish its color. It is said to be so precious that if a king of England were taken prisoner one could ransom him with it, for it is said to be worth more than the whole of England." Letts, p. 44 (Tetzel).

Brown, was placed by request next to the *regale* ruby in 1434.[80] The petition for placement in a certain spot indicates a visual hierarchy of sorts on the feretory. Naturally, as pilgrims' attention was drawn to specific outstanding features, so placing one's votive gift nearby would be guaranteed to draw some attention to one's donation. The attending monks would point out important donations and, according to Erasmus, note not only their important donor, but their monetary worth.[81]

Hanging nearby the tomb and shrine were some of the most revered and commented-upon votives, jeweled crowns. These were also given as representatives of the individual ruler as well as the monarchy as a whole. For example, in July 1299, Edward I offered the crown of Scotland to Becket's shrine to commemorate his marriage to Margaret at Canterbury.[82] This crown might have been referred to by Simon Fitzsimons, who, in 1322, wrote that the shrine was "crowned with a regal diadem."[83] The importance of the presentation of crowns to Becket's shrine is reflected in their appearance in royal prophecies. *Adam Davy's Five Dreams about Edward the Second* includes a dream of the king holding a golden crown and standing before the high altar at Canterbury, where he was beaten by two knights. The king (lamb-like) suffered without fighting back.[84] An example of such a votive can be seen in a Canterbury window, where a golden crown hangs above an altar. (fig. 2.6)

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[80] Spencer (1998), p. 101.

[81] Desiderius Erasmus, *Pilgrimages to Saint Mary of Walsingham and Saint Thomas of Canterbury*. Ed and transl. John G. Nichols (London: John Boywer Nichols & Son, 1875), pp. 55–56. A "goodly monk" explained the relics to Chaucer's pilgrims as described in the prologue to the *Tale of Beryn*. *The Tale of Beryn,* eds. F.J. Furnivall and W.G. Stone (Millwood, N.Y., Kraus Reprint Co., 1975), p. 6.

[82] The crown was given in votive thanks after it was taken from John Balliol when he tried to escape to France. Webb, *Pilgrimage in Medieval England*, p. 124. Some pieces had small silver-gilt crowns or chaplets with precious stones. Richard Marks, *Image and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2004), p. 247 for examples. Votive crowns had a long history in Europe, including the famed Visigothic votive hanging crowns.

[83] Eugene Hoade, *Western pilgrims; the itineraries of Fr. Simon Fitzsimons (1322–23), a certain Englishman (1344–45), Thomas Brygg (1392), and notes on other authors and pilgrims.* (Jerusalem: Franciscan Print Press, 1952, repr. 1970), pp. 3–4.

[84] Then, when the knights took their leave, four radiant bands of light emanated from his head in red and white. Other dreams implied that Edward would be crowned Holy Roman Emperor and that Christ would accompany him on a pilgrimage crusade where the heathen would be vanquished. Rupert Taylor, *The Political Prophecy in England* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1911), pp. 93–94.

The encrustation of the shrine precinct by donations of the wealthy and powerful enhanced the reputation of the shrine as it enhanced the reputation of the donors by physically linking the image and the wishes of such donors to the shrine. These donations were scrupulously recorded by the monks as proof of high-level devotion to Becket, but they were more even more important to royalty than to the monastery.[85] Sovereigns incurred great expense when they commissioned not only votive portraits but associated imagery in the form of their coats of arms. Vestments, books, chalices, and altar frontals, stained glass, etc. were all produced with royal arms and they reminded the public, the monks, and the saint of their devotion.

This was because votive interaction was regarded as necessary for English sovereigns. Believing in the intercessory function of saints regarding state and personal affairs, they routinely granted monies to churches with important relics, witnessed important translations, made regular pilgrimages, collected relics, donated images and gems to shrines, and sponsored the production of sacred art and architecture throughout Britain. Yet Canterbury Cathedral was special. Royalty urgently and regularly requested that the Canterbury monks pray for success in military ventures, the health of the monarchy, protection against bad weather and disease, and more. They laid the financial gains of their endeavors (personal and public) before Becket's pur-

[85] Indeed, royal visits were a real financial burden on the monastery, because in addition to giving a gift each royal expected to *receive* a sumptuous gift, like the set of silver ewers and bowls and the pony given to Edward III and Queen Philippa of Hainault in 1333. Dobson, "Monks of Canterbury," p. 143; Woodruff, "Financial Aspect of the Cult of St. Thomas," pp. 28–29. In contrast, royal monetary donations were often limited to a specific size (around 7 shillings), so they would donate that same amount to various altars within a single church. In 1297, Edward I gave 7s to "Image of St. Mary in the Vault." The donations were made on June 5 and June 10. *Expense Roll*, 25 Edward I, British Library addl. MS 7965 fol. 7b. In 1300, he, his wife, and two sons each gave 7s to the image. *Liber quotidianus contrarotularis garerobae anno regni regis Edward 1*, ed. J. Nichols (London: Society of Antiquaries, 1787), p. 28; W.A. Scott Robertson, *The Crypt of Canterbury Cathedral: Its Architecture, Its History, Its Frescoes* (London: Mitchell and Hughes, 1880) p. 526. Queen Philippa with her son Edmund the visited Cathedral in 1352 and gave 12d. Robertson, (1880), p. 527; when French King John II (as a hostage) visited Canterbury, he gave offerings to Becket's shrine and the Virgin in the Undercroft. *Chronicon Joahnnis de Reading et Anonymi Cantuariensis*, pp. 208–209, 220–221; Webb (2000), p. 133. In 1384, Richard II gave 6s 8d at shrine and the same at the head reliquary. Nigel Saul, *Richard II* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 317–318; Public Record Office, London, E101/401/2, fol. 37r. noted that he gave 3s 4d at the martyrdom, and 6s 8d at Our Lady of Undercroft Chapel.

view, reminding people of Becket's favor. "[T]here was never a period between the reigns of Henry II and Henry VIII when an English monarch failed to appreciate the importance of as close and appreciative a relationship with St. Thomas's community as his other commitments allowed."[86] To show their appreciation they presented the shrine with sparkling votive pieces made of gold, silver, enamels, and gems that naturally stood out against the piles of whey-colored wax votives, reflecting the multitude of flickering candles. In turn, they also put their wishes, their interests before the masses of pilgrims who visited the shrine.

Stage Managing the Cult at Becket's Tomb & Shrine

All these votives had to be assembled and displayed near enough to the tomb and shrine to emphasize the devotion garnered by Becket, but far enough away to make room for succeeding waves of pilgrims and the ever-increasing amount of ex-voto gifts. Over the tomb hung oil lamps and to the side candles burned on iron racks (indicated by surviving indentations) and nearby hung Becket's spare hair shirt and underwear.[87] Even with these impediments, documents make it evident that pilgrims were able to get quite near the tomb where they spent a significant amount of time. Benedict tells of the sick who were "lying in pain all about the church" and a great multitude of

[86] Barrie Dobson, "Monks of Canterbury," p. 142.

[87] Traces of wall paintings record such images as a standing figure of the archbishop, Christ in Glory, etc. Daniel Knapp, "The Relyk of a Sent: A Gloss on Chaucer's Pilgrimage," *ECH*, vol. 39, no. 1 (March 1972), p. 5. See also Benedict of Peterborough, *Miracula Sancti Thomæ Cantuariensis*, ed. James Robertson, *Materials for the Life of Thomas Becket* (London: Rolls Series, 1876), vol. II, p. 158; Edward Grim, *Vita S. Thomae, Cantuariensis Archepiscopi et Martyris,* ed. James Robertson, *Materials for the Life of Thomas Becket* (London: Rolls Series, 1875–1885), vol. II, p. 442; Herbert of Bosham, in *Vita Sancti Thomæ, archiepiscopi et martyris*, ed. James Robertson, *Materials for the Life of Thomas Becket* (London: Rolls Series, 1875–1885), vol. III, p. 521; John of Salisbury, *Vita Sancti Thomæ, Cantuariensis archiepiscopi et martyris*, ed. James Robertson, *Materials for the Study of Thomas Becket* (London: Rolls Series, 1875–1885), vol. ii, p. 321; Roger of Potigny, *Vita Sancti Thomæ*, ed. James Robertson, *Materials for the Study of Thomas Becket* (London: Rolls Series, 1875–1885), vol. iv, p. 134; anonymous *Passio Sancta Thome* in ed. James Robertson, *Materials for the Study of Thomas Becket* (London: Rolls Series, 1875–1885), vol. iv, p. 188.

feeble, blind, lame, and withered folk hoping for the martyr's help.[88] The insane were tied nearby, as was Henry of Fordwich until he was restored to health.[89] Assisting such pilgrims were monks who accepted pilgrim donations in a ladle or in donation boxes and who doled out the precious Canterbury Water (from a well?), reputed to be tinged with the blood of Becket in decorated tin vials (ampullae) which had to be placed somewhere nearby. Adding to the crowds surrounding the tomb, were the friends and loved ones accompanying the sufferers. The room which such sufferers had to move about is reflected in accounts of people who experienced ecstatic experiences near the tomb. They explain that after drinking the Canterbury Water, the pilgrims felt themselves grow so large that the church became too narrow for them, many of whom acted on the feeling. For instance, Richard, whose legs and feet were contorted, drank the water, suffered a fit, then rose to his feet, then leapt onto the altar near the tomb.[90]

These stories point to a rather large space being held open around the tomb, necessitating a conscious decision to clear away, store, and display votive gifts in places where they would not block such activity. The stained glass images of the pilgrims around the tomb (as idealized as they were) show architectural structures draped with cloths and the tomb top itself the scene of changing votive donations (coins, candles, crutches, etc.). Sometimes wax votives were left for years (until they cracked and crumbled), while others were melted down for candles or to make way for another ever-accreting layer of votive devotion.

The shrine posed even greater problems for the monks because it attracted so many pilgrims and because it featured so many valuable (and tempting) votives which needed protection. Because of this pilgrims had to go through a number of physical layers meant to protect and enhance the moment of viewing the actual shrine. After visiting other sacred areas of the cathedral, they were brought within the shrine precinct.[91] This was enclosed by an iron fence, which was locked every

[88] Benedict Book II, chapter 47, 68; Abbott, vol. I, pp. 260, 270. One miracle describes a younger sister awaiting her cure ("under the holy cross") after the oldest had been healed. Benedict Book II, chapter 170; Abbott, vol. I, p. 99.

[89] Benedict Book II, chapter 66; Abbott, vol. I, p. 263.

[90] Benedict Book Ib; Abbott, vol. I, pp. 267–268. See also William Book II, chapter 247; Abbott, p. 324; Benedict Book II, chapter 79; Abbott, vol. I, p. 269.

[91] There is evidence that higher-ranked pilgrims were brought directly before the shrine. See *The Tale of Beryn*, Eds. F.J. Furnivall and W.G. Stone (Millwood, N.Y.,

night and during the shrine keeper's mealtimes.[92] After admittance, the pilgrims heard prayers and, when it was deemed appropriate, the keepers, using a winch attached to the high vault above, raised a cover so that the pilgrims could gaze upon the sparkling feretory.[93] The cover, initially made of cloth and later of painted wood, was interchangeable for ordinary and special days.[94] Covers like these were commonly found at major shrines, like that of St. Cuthbert's Durham, which had silver bells that rang when it was lifted up.[95] The pilgrims' anticipation must have been great, for records tell of the awestruck response of the pilgrims to the incredible sight made even more impressive by the votives which covered every available, accessible surface.

The most valuable were attached directly to or placed right near the shrine, while others were hung over beams and buttresses, or affixed to cloths which hung from these beams.[96] The now-vanished beam/rail at Canterbury (perhaps carved with scenes of the Life of Becket, like that at St. Alban's) ran across the high altar. Called an *artificiosa*

Kraus Reprint Co., 1975) where the noble pilgrims are ushered to the shrine while the lower-class pilgrims were left to amble about first.

[92] *Customary of the Shrine of St. Thomas Becket*, British Library Ms Add 59696 ff. 1, 2, 4, 9; Nilson, p. 96; D.H. Turner, "Customary of the Shrine of St. Thomas Becket," *Canterbury Cathedral Chronicles* 30 (1976) pp. 17–18. One of the duties of the guardians of the shrine was with an "offensive and defensive instrument" made a search in dark corners for any malingerers or stray dogs who might wish to spend the night in its precincts.

[93] Pulleys were also used to lift enormously high covers of baptismal fonts as seen in churches at Ufford and Hepworth in Suffolk. The carved wooden dragon used to lift the now-missing font cover survives in York Minster.

[94] In 1534 3s. 4d. was allocated to the repair of "the wheel of the shrine of St. Thomas" which winched up the cover. "Circa Rota capse feretri sancta Thomas" Canterbury Cathedral Archives, DCc/DE 163 (Miscellaneous Accounts and Registers); Nilson, p. 40. A special woven canopy with hangings donated by the Countess of Kent, the sister of Archbishop Thomas Arundel (r. 1396–1397) for the Feast of the Translation on July 7, Turner, p. 19. Later this cloth canopy was replaced by a wooden cover, as commented on by Erasmus in Desiderius Erasmus, *Pilgrimages to Saint Mary of Walsingham and Saint Thomas of Canterbury* (transl. John G. Nichols) (London: John Boywer Nichols & Son, 1875), p. 55. The regular covering would be returned to its place on July 21. Before the feast of St. Thomas one of the shrine guardians cleaned all the jewels and ornaments on the shrine and every fourth year they saw to the restoration of the twelve large candles.

[95] James, Raine, ed. *A description or breife declaration of all the ancient monuments, rites, and customes belonginge or beinge within the monastical church of Durham before the suppression. Written in 1593* (London: J.B. Nichols and Son, 1842), p. 4.

[96] York Minster Library, M2/2d, lists gifts attached to the shrines in York Minster in the early sixteenth century. They include beads of silver, coral, hearts of silver, a breast of gilded silver, rings, precious stones, high-value coins, 2 images of a bull, 10 ships of silver, one staff marked with the letter D, and more. Swanson, pp. 179–181.

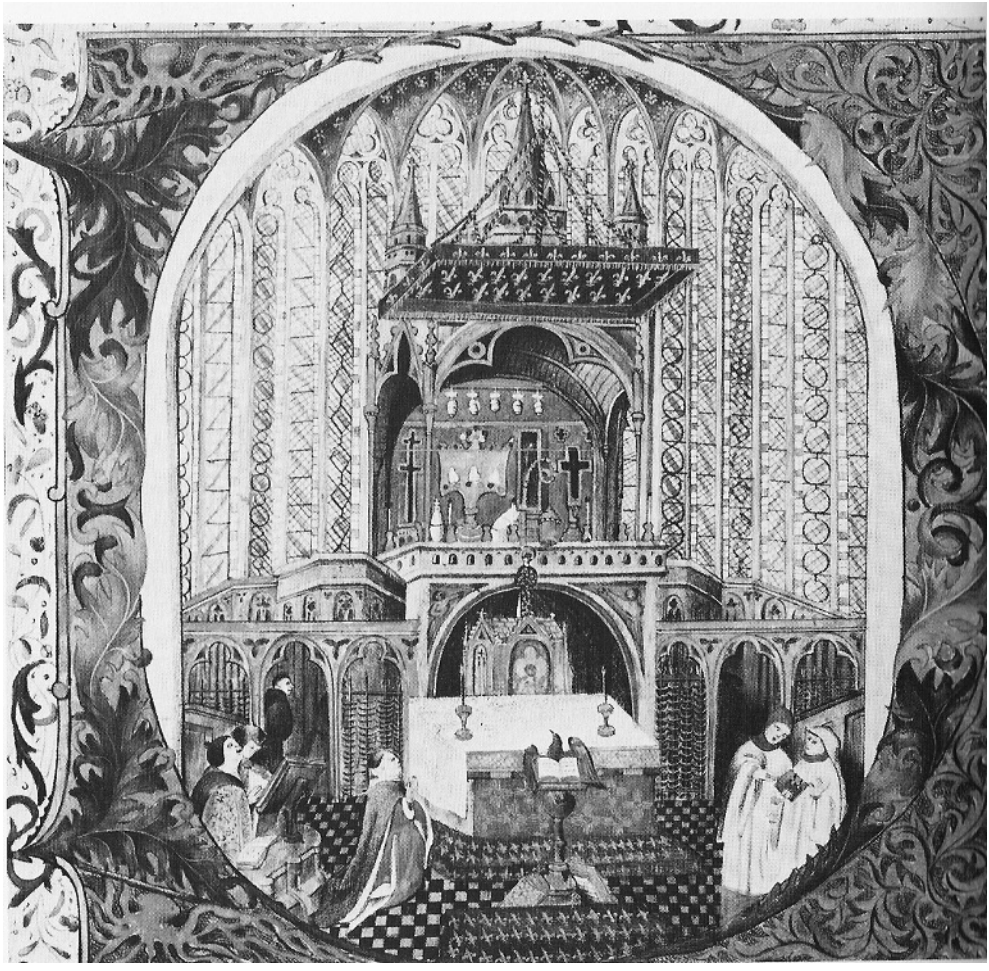

Fig. 2.10 Beams and canopies surrounding the shrine at Sainte Chapelle, Paris, 15th century. Note placement of reliquaries (crosses and crown) and hanging oil ampullae on beams and rods. Lithograph made by A. Godard after a gouache by Mlle Cottalorda of Debruge-Duménil before 1837 after the *Missal of Jouvenal des Ursins*, folio 83, *c*. 1430. Photo: after Marie Madeleine Gauthier, *Highways of the Faith: Relics and Reliquaries from Jerusalem to Compostela* (Secaucus, NJ: Welllfleet Press, 1983), p. 164, fig. 95.

Fig. 2.11 Pilgrim leaves votive leg at shrine of St. William, York Minster. Note the rail behind with head, leg, hand, and heart votives. Photo: author.

machina, it was set below a lintel/beam that allowed for the display of reliquaries, as seen in an image of the shrine precinct of Sainte Chapelle, Paris.[97] (fig. 2.10) These beams were omnipresent at shrine sites such as that seen in a 15th-century window in York Minster hung with votive images of a woman's head, a leg, a hand, and a heart, while a pilgrim offers up a wax leg to the shrine of St. William.[98] (fig. 2.11)

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[97] Paul Binski, *Crown of Becket: Art and Imagination in Gothic England 1170–1300* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), p. 171; Thomas Walsingham, *Gesta abbatum monasterii Sancta Albani*, ed. Henry Thomas Riley. (London: Rolls Series 28, 1867–1869), vol. I, p. 283; Paul Binski, "What was the Westminster Retable?" *Journal of the British Archaeology Association* vol. 140 (1987), p. 116; Paul Binski, "The Murals in the Nave of St. Albans Abbey" in *Church and City 1000–1500: Essays in Honour of Christopher Brooke*, eds. D. Abulafia, M. Franlin, and Miri Rubin (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1992), p. 264.

[98] Christopher Wilson, *The Shrines of St. William of York* (York: York Minster, 1977), cover picture. See also Oxford, MS Bodleian 277, f.375v., Brian Spencer, "King Henry of Windsor and the London Pilgrim," *Collectanea Londiniensia: Studies in*

and the only surviving English wax votives from Exeter Cathedral were found placed up high on top of a carved stone rail.

These rails, racks, beams, and cloths allowed the tomb and shrine to be seen and interacted with by keeping the votives away from the main site; yet it also allowed for the presence of a multitude of wax images, trindles, and candles given by poorer pilgrims. Pilgrims brought gifts to the shrine that not only symbolized their status and their ailment, but their hopes and wishes. Votives not only created an interaction between the pilgrim and the saint, but between the individual pilgrim and the crowd, the church, and the community. The interaction took place in the mind of the pilgrim, in the apparatus around the shrine, and on the reliquary shrine itself, apparently composed of expensive votive gifts. Where and how votives were placed were of crucial importance in stage-managing the cult for they characterized the power of the saint and enhanced the status of all those associated with the shrine. Interaction through votives allowed the masses to join in the *sacra conversatione*; their gifts which adorned (and crowded) the areas near the tomb and shrine enabling them to join the community that surrounded St. Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral.

London Archaeology and History Presented to Ralph Merrifield, London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, Special Paper No. 2 (1978), fig. 1. See also the woodcut by Michael Ostendorfer, *Pilgrimage to the New Church at Regensburg,* 1519), also pictures crutches, hats, rosary beads, and pitchforks hung on beams under the eaves of the church. David Freedburg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. 102, fig. 34.

3. CRADLING POWER: FEMALE DEVOTIONS AND EARLY NETHERLANDISH JÉSUEAUX

Annette LeZotte

Fifteenth century Netherlandish jésueaux, or small cribs containing figures of the infant Jesus, are devotional objects that cry out for interaction with the worshipper. Their forms entice the viewer to touch: to ring the bells strung from the cradle posts, to tuck the tiny Infant into the beautifully embroidered bedding, or to rock the Child to sleep. While larger-scale jésueaux were commonly displayed during the Christmas season,[1] smaller scale cribs were frequently given as gifts or acquired by women[2] entering convents or beguinages as part of their devotional accoutrements.[3] This essay will explore the unique associations between jésueaux and the women who owned them to argue that these cribs reflected the type of *vita activa* sought by many religious women while also offering them avenues to explore the *vita contemplativa*. Furthermore, I will investigate how the forms and decorations of jésueaux fostered a philosophy of active engagement not only with

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[1] For an explanation of the forms and functions of larger scale crèches used during the Christmas season see Rudolf Berliner, "The Origins of the Créche" *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 30 (1946), pp. 249–78.

[2] For example, a 1508 document from the city of Bruges records a devotional cradle with a doll of the infant Jesus in it that was given by a woman of the surname van Rye to her nieces, nuns by the names of Anne and Marguerite. See E. Niffle-Anciaux, *Les Repos de Jésus et les Berceaux Reliquaires*, (Namur: Imprimerie Paul Godenne, 1896), p. 45. For a discussion of who commissioned works of art for female monastic institutions as well as the types of works of art that were commonly found in religious communities see Anabel Thomas, *Art and Piety in the Female Religious Communities of Renaissance Italy: Iconography, Space and the Religious Woman's Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[3] For information about the sub-categories of jèsueaux forms and their links to specific geographic locations as well as a brief discussion about how the domestic crèche transitions to a convent cradle/reliquary form see E. Niffle-Anciaux, *Les Repos de Jésus*, pp. 44–52, 87–114. For additional information about the devotional objects women entering convents were gifted see Henk van Os, *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe 1300–1500* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 102 and Ursula Schlegel, "The Christchild as Devotional Image in Medieval Italian Sculpture: A Contribution to Ambrogio Lorenzetti Studies" *The Art Bulletin* 52/1 (March 1970), p. 8.

the devotional objects themselves but with the spiritual and secular concerns of the women who owned them (despite the attempts of male clerics to diminish or control such activities).

Theological Foundations of the Jésueaux Form

Jésueaux, sometimes referred to as *repos de Jésus*, emerged as a devotional art form during the early fourteenth century.[4] These small cribs, elaborately sculpted, gilded and polychromed, reached the peak of their popularity during the fifteenth century, with their production diminishing rapidly in the sixteenth century.[5] The commonly accepted foundation myth of jésueaux can be found in a significant narrative in the life of St. Francis of Assisi.[6] In preparation for a special Nativity celebration scheduled for the evening of December 25, 1223 at the church at Greccio, St. Francis commissioned the building of a manger. On the evening of the Nativity celebration worshippers holding candles were awed by a procession that filled Francis' manger with piles of hay and a live ox and ass. This *tableau vivant* served as the backdrop for Francis' celebration of the Christmas Mass and as he began to recount the story of the Nativity several miracles purportedly occurred.[7] The first of these miracles came while Francis was reciting the tale of Christ's birth; when he said the word "Bethlehem" his voice took on the character of a bleating lamb. The hay that Francis used to set the manger scene also perpetuated miracles as it took on the power to heal

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[4] The best study of jésueaux, although seemingly dated, is E. Niffle-Anciaux, *Les Repos de Jésus et les Berceaux Reliquaires* (Namur: Imprimerie Paul Godenne, 1896). Niffle-Anciaux's book provided numerous descriptions of jésueaux culled from fourteenth and fifteenth-century inventories.

[5] Pierre Colman, *L'Orfèvrerie Religieuse Liégeoise du XV^e Siècle á la Révolution* (Liège: Université de Liège, 1966), p. 158.

[6] Niffle-Anciaux, *Les Repos des Jésus*, pp. 11–12. Sixteenth-century Jesuit writers identified the Greccio miracle as the source for the larger Christmas crèche form as well. See Berliner, "The Origins of the Crèche," p. 250.

[7] Scholars agree that Francis' Nativity celebration was influenced by medieval mystery plays and that the creation of such a religious experience was not new to the medieval worshipper. What is significant about Greccio, however, were the miracles that occurred both during and after the celebration. See Berliner, "The Origins of the Crèche," pp. 249–74 and Erwin Rosenthal, "The Crib of Greccio and Franciscan Realism" *The Art Bulletin* 36/1 (March 1954): pp. 57–60. Berliner and Rosenthal draw from the two primary *vita* of St. Francis: Thomas of Celano's *Legenda prima B. Francisci* published in 1228–1229 and Saint Bonaventura's *Legenda Major* written in 1263.

both animals and humans who ingested it or lay upon it.[8] But the most significant miracle in terms of the development of the jésueau form, according to different accounts of the saint's *vita*, came from Francis' ability to speak in the voice of the lamb. Doing this, he created a divine presence that affected the worshippers surrounding him, allowing a man attending the service to be rewarded with a vision[9] of Francis reaching out to a lifeless/sleeping child (Christ) laying in the manger, lifting him and cradling him in his arms, and waking him.[10]

Early imagery designed to promulgate the cult of St. Francis illustrated, and thus verified, the worshipper's vision of Francis lifting and awakening the Christ child. A fresco from the Upper Church at Assisi (fig. 3.1) shows Francis kneeling before an elaborately carved wooden box/crib and tenderly pulling the baby Jesus out of the cradle and into his arms.[11] In the Assisi fresco the saint is surrounded by a variety of worshippers in various states of devotion. Several Franciscan brothers are shown with heads tilted back and mouths wide open in song, a

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[8] Rosenthal, "The Crib of Greccio," p. 58.

[9] The use of images as catalysts for visionary experience in the later Middle Ages is discussed in many primary and secondary sources. An excellent summary is found in Sixten Ringbom, "Devotional Images and Imaginative Devotions: Notes on the Place of Art in Late Medieval Private Piety" *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 6/73 (March 1969), pp. 159–170. For a discussion of the link between images and visionary experience in the monastic context see Jeffrey Hamburger, "The Use of Images in the Pastoral Care of Nuns: The Case of Heinrich Suso and the Dominicans," *The Art Bulletin* 71/1 (March 1989), pp. 20–46. For a discussion of how monastic theories of visionary experience related to images becomes laicized in the later Middle Ages see Craig Harbison, "Visions and Meditations in Early Flemish Painting" *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 15/2 (1985), pp. 87–118.

[10] Rosenthal, "The Crib of Greccio," p. 58. Rosenthal's summary most closely follows the version offered in Thomas of Celano's *vita* of Francis, and Rosenthal comments in note 4 on page 57 of his article his belief that this is the text scholars should rely upon for information about Francis' life and miracles as Celano was Francis' first biographer. However, the Franciscan Order deemed Bonaventura's 1263 *Lengenda Major* as the saint's "official" biography.

[11] For information on the authorship, technical aspects and workshop practices of the fresco cycle of St. Francis at the Upper Church of Assisi see Frank Jewett Mather, "Giotto's St. Francis Series at Assisi Historically Considered" *The Art Bulletin* 25/2 (June 1943), pp. 97–111 and Leonetto Tintori and Millard Meiss, *The Painting of the Life of Saint Francis in Assisi, with notes on the Arena Chapel* (New York: New York University Press, 1962). For information on the iconographic sources of the Francis cycle at Assisi see Alastair Smart, *The Assisi Problem and the Art of Giotto: A Study of the Legend of St. Francis in the Upper Church of San Francesco, Assisi* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971) and Janetta Rebold Benton, *Influences of Ancient Roman Wall-Painting on Late Thirteenth-Century Italian Painting: A New Interpretation of the Upper Church of San Francesco at Assisi* (PhD diss., Brown University, 1984).

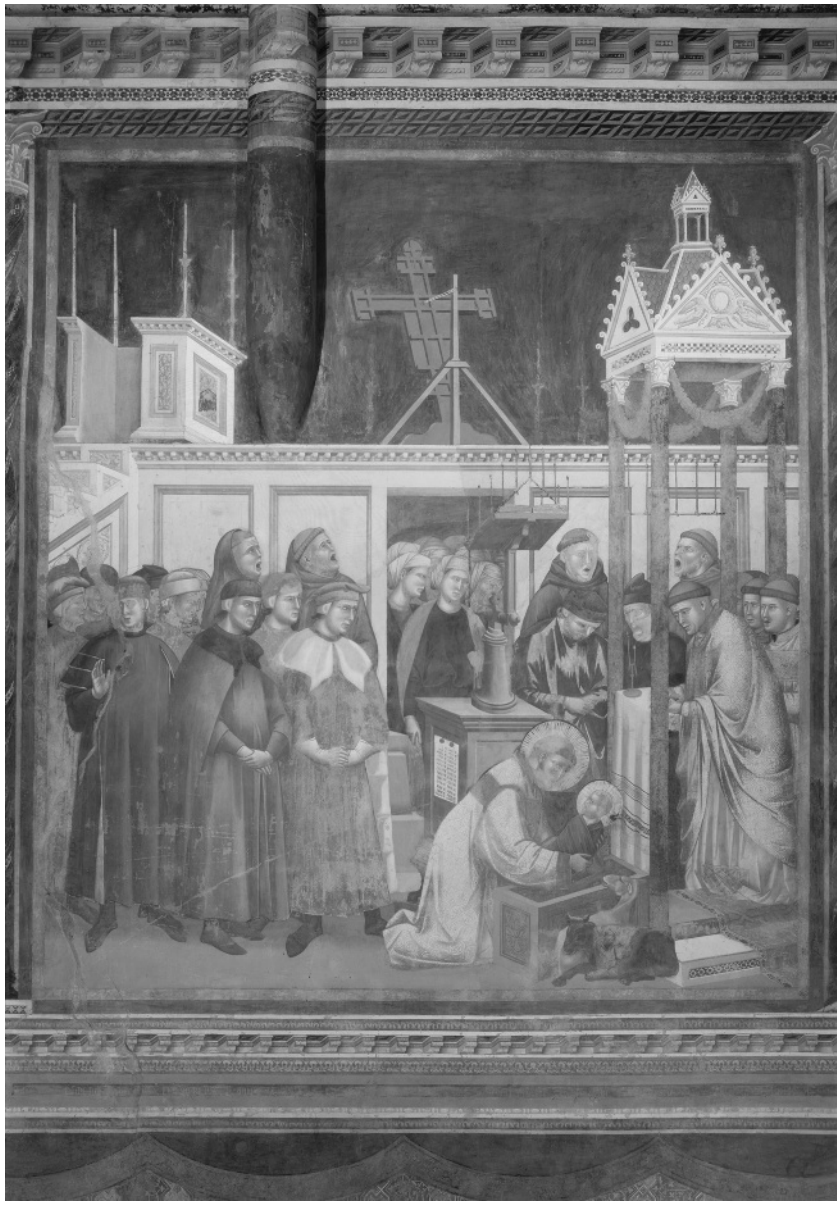

Fig. 3.1 Giotto di Bondone. *Miracle of the Crib at Greccio*. Fresco from the Upper Chapel at Assisi. *c.* 1297. Photo courtesy of Art Resource.

small group of figures at the far left of the composition seem engaged in conversation, and just above Francis' head a man bows his head and clasps his hands as if absorbed in prayer. The multitude of religious reactions displayed by the figures in the Assisi fresco is intended to be more than a charming depiction which mimics actual human interactions. Instead, it evidences the nascent devotional philosophies which were blossoming throughout Europe during the later Middle Ages which emphasized that visionary experience could be cultivated through a variety of means.[12]

The development of this devotional climate which embraced a multitude of visionary experiences and fostered the use of art objects as part of devotional practice emerged from mendicant theological philosophies and attitudes.[13] No longer were worshippers required to retreat to monastic cloisters and contemplate holy texts to achieve unity with God. The Franciscan *Sacrum Commercium sancti Francisci cum domina Paupertate*, written in 1227, introduced the idea of the secular world as cloister to worshippers.[14] The *Sacrum Commercium* takes the form of an allegorical narrative that uses the figure of Dame Poverty to review the key tenants of the Franciscan Order. At one point in the story Dame Poverty asks to see the Franciscans' monastery and, "the bretheren took her to a hilltop and showed her all the world that could be seen from there, saying: 'This, mistress, is our monastery.'"[15] The *Sacrum Commercium* was followed in 1259 by Bonaventure's *The*

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[12] For a discussion of how physical postures/gestures or facial expressions reflect different types of devotional experience see William Hood, "Saint Dominic's Manners of Praying: Gestures in Fra Angelico's Cell Frescoes at S. Marco" *The Art Bulletin* 68/2 (June 1986), pp. 195–206. For information on the link between mendicant preaching, visual arts, and visionary experience see Michael Baxandall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy: A Primer in the Social History of Pictorial Style* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), pp. 48–56. The most comprehensive discussion of the history of the use of images for devotion is found in Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), see in particular chapter 19 "The Dialogue with the Image: The Era of the Private Image at the End of the Middle Ages."

[13] Heiko Oberman, "Fourteenth-Century Religious Thought: A Premature Profile" *Speculum* 53/1 (January 1978), pp. 80–93 and Bernard McGinn, "The Changing Shape of Late Medieval Mysticism" *Church History* 65/2 (June 1996), pp. 197–219. Oberman privileges the role of the Franciscan Order over that of the Dominican in shaping religious thought of the era; McGinn takes a broader view considering the influences of not only the mendicant orders but the related religious groups that formed in response to mendicant theology as well.

[14] McGinn, "The Changing Shape of Late Medieval Mysticism," p. 199.

[15] van Os, *The Art of Devotion*, p. 162.

Soul's Journey into God where the Franciscan theologian proclaimed, "All worldly things are vestiges in which we can see our God."[16] Other medieval theologians quickly embraced and reflected this new conception of the worldly accessibility of the spiritual in their writings and sermons. During the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries the Dominican preacher Meister Eckhart instructed his followers that:

> Truly, when people think that they are acquiring more of God in inwardness, in devotion, in sweetness and in various approaches than they do by the fireside or in the stable, you are acting just as if you took God and muffled his head up in a cloak and pushed him under a bench.[17]

Meister Eckhart's suggestion that God can be found by the fireside or in the stable was echoed by other late medieval mystics who recognized the power of using corporeal objects of this world as a means of accessing the next. Early in the fifteenth century Jean Gerson articulated his philosophy regarding the use of works of art as part of devotional practice, "And we ought thus to learn to transcend with our minds from these visible things to the invisible, from the corporeal to the spiritual. For this is the purpose of the image."[18] Fifteenth-century Augustinian theologian Johannes Mauburnus[19] advocated that inexperienced worshippers, in particular, needed the benefit of intercessory objects to guide their prayers. Rudolph Berliner summarizes Mauburnus' instructions on the act of devotion, "…he advises the novice in contemplation, who wants to visit the Child in the manger, to summon to his view the scene of the Nativity, either materially or imaginatively; to rock the cradle or to behave quite as he would in the real presence of the Newly Born."[20]

Mauburnus' description of using a devotional object to assist in a visionary experience where the worshipper is encouraged to rock the cradle of the infant Jesus calls to mind the story of Saint Francis' miracle at Greccio. Furthermore, it suggests that the genesis for many of the object-based devotional practices of the later Middle Ages can be

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[16] Amy Neff, "'Palma Dabit Palmam': Franciscan Themes in a Devotional Manuscript" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 65 (2002), p. 50.

[17] McGinn, "The Changing Shape of Late Medieval Mysticism," pp. 199–200.

[18] Ringbom, "Devotional Images and Imaginative Devotions," p. 165.

[19] Both Gerson and Mauburnus were part of the *devotio moderna* movement. See John Van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers of the Common Life: The Devotio Moderna and the World of the Later Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008).

[20] Berliner, "The Origins of the Crèche," pp. 252–53.

found in earlier mendicant narratives and theology. Jésueaux, in both their form and decoration, are evidence of such an evolution as they vividly recall and recreate the "crib miracle" at Greccio while referencing and addressing worldly aspects of the spiritual life.[21]

Convent Context

The provenances of many extant jésueaux can be traced back to convents or beguinages which asserts a primarily female audience for these devotional cribs.[22] As such, jésueaux are poignant signifiers of the lives and devotional activities of late medieval women who lived in these religious communities. To best understand how the exquisite cradles holding small dolls of the baby Jesus reflect the concerns of nuns and beguines, it is necessary to gain some sense of the nature of the different types of religious lifestyles late medieval women could experience.[23]

Religious communities for women grew significantly in number during the later Middle Ages and their official recognition by the Church indicates the desire on the part of medieval women to establish institutions for their spiritual instruction. A 1490 chronicle written by the German nun Magdalena Kremer documents the active role a group

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[21] Bernard McGinn argues for such an inter-relationship, "Significant new forms of religious life created around the year 1200, especially the mendicant orders of Franciscans and Dominicans and the independent groups of women known as Beguines, provided the impetus for what may be called the "new mysticism" of the period from 1200 to 1600 C.E." McGinn, "The Changing Shape of Late Medieval Mysticism," p. 198. Likewise, Ernest McDonnell sees a link between the Franciscan forms of piety and the underlying philosophies that led to the development of the beguines via the influence of Jacques de Vitry see Ernest W. McDonnell, *The Beguines and Beghards in Medieval Culture with Special Emphasis on the Belgian Scene* (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), p. 20. Testimony given upon the canonization of St. Clare of Assisi recorded that Clare sent letters to nuns in Belgium hoping to foster the mendicant philosophies she embraced in Northern Europe see note 12 of Lezlie Knox, "Audacious Nuns: Institutionalizing the Franciscan Order of Saint Clare" *Church History* 69/1 (March 2000), p. 44. Furthermore, Dayton Phillips, in a case study of the beguinages of Strasburg, has shown that beguines in that area chose to live near mendicant monasteries. See Dayton Phillips, *Beguines in Medieval Strasburg: A Study of the Social Aspect of Beguine Life* (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1941).

[22] Niffle-Anciaux, *Les Repos de Jésus*, p. 44.

[23] An excellent summary of the different types of religious communities for women in the later Middle Ages is found in Helen M. Jewell, *Women in Late Medieval and Reformation Europe 1200–1550* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 104–32.

of medieval nuns took to have their communities officially recognized after the Dominicans refused to allow women to enter their order:

> From many cloisters in German lands two or three sisters from each set out on foot, joined together, and traveled under great hardship to Rome where they protested their desperate situation and misery to our holy father the pope and besought him that he would again place them under the direction and protection of the Dominicans. The pope perceived their great earnestness and returned them to the care of the Dominicans. And where they previously had had one women's cloister, they now had seven to one.[24]

While Magdalena Kremer and her compatriots sought a traditionally cloistered religious lifestyle, later medieval women were not restricted to such formally enclosed institutions. A more active type of religious community for women was called the beguinage. Beguinages were populated by women who participated in the organized spiritual exercises common in traditional convents, but they rejected cloistering in favor of engagement with the community. In fact, some beguines lived in private residences and they perceived their work as a positive manifestation of faith. Cistercian monk Caesarius of Heisterbach, in the late 1220s, described the beguines:

> Although these [holy] women, whom we know to be very numerous in the diocese of Liège, live among the people wearing lay clothes, they still surpass many of the cloister in the love of God. They live the eremitical life among the crowds, spiritual among the worldly and virginal among those who seek pleasure. As their battle is greater, so is their grace, and a greater crown will await them.[25]

Beguines were not bound by the strict vows taken by women entering traditional convents as they enjoyed the freedom to leave the beguinage either to embrace a more secular life through marriage or a stricter sanctity through taking vows to join a convent.[26] The freedom of beguines, however, was not completely unrestricted. While

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[24] Anne Winston-Allen, *Convent Chronicles: Women Writing About Women and Reform in the Late Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004), pp. 66–67.

[25] Walter Simons, *Cities of Ladies: Beguine Communities in the Medieval Low Countries, 1200–1565* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001), p. 35.

[26] Penelope Galloway, "'Discreet and Devout Maidens': Women's Involvement in Beguine Communities in Northern France, 1200–1500" in Diane Watt, (ed.), *Medieval Women in their Communities* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), p. 94.

beguinages did not have the strict administrative structures of traditional convent communities, they were subject to supervision by male clerics and could be censured or dissolved by Church officials if the activities of the women members were deemed inappropriate or encroached upon the duties of male clergy.[27]

Although the administrative structures and religious strictures of convents and beguinages differed during the later Middle Ages, there were commonalities between the women in the two communities.[28] Both nuns and beguines expressed a desire to heighten their spiritual experiences through their membership in their respective religious groups. Furthermore, their demonstration of this desire was often viewed with suspicion by male clerics who attempted to limit the ways in which females exercised both devotional and ministerial activities.[29] Finally, women in both convents and beguinages were given (or commissioned) jésueaux as devotional aids; and nuns and beguines used these objects in a manner which conveyed both their spiritual and their professional aspirations. Thus, the traditional forms and decorations of jésueaux reflect the shared concerns of nuns and beguines. Nuns' and beguines' visual, tactile and aural interactions with jésueaux reinforced this.

Cradling Power

Jésueaux owned by nuns and beguines were small in scale, usually measuring less than a foot high or long, with the structure of the crib shaped and decorated as a Gothic church building. The tiny stature of jésueaux is significant as the scale limits spiritual interaction with the

[27] Galloway, "Discreet and Devout Maidens," pp. 96–97.

[28] A good summary of the similarities between traditional nuns and beguines is found in Dennis Devlin, "Feminine Lay Piety in the High Middle Ages: The Beguines" in John A. Nichols and Lillian Thomas Shank, eds. *Medieval Religious Women: Distant Echoes* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1984), pp. 189–191.

[29] For example, during the mid fifteenth century Alijt Bake was removed from her post as prioress of the Windesheim convent in Ghent because of her outspoken zeal in bringing about spiritual reforms in the community. Her male superiors felt such reforms should derive from their counsel and leadership. See Winston-Allen, *Convent Chronicles*, pp. 113–14. Accused of "illegal preaching" among other laxities, all of the beguinages in the city of Cologne were closed by edit of the Archbishop and the beguines were placed in traditional, papal approved orders under stricter clerical supervision. See Galloway, "Discreet and Devout Maidens," pp. 96–97.

object to a single viewer thus asserting the primacy of personal devotion.[30] Maintaining devotional autonomy was a concern for women in religious communities as one of the ways clerics punished nuns or beguines was through the "reformation" of devotional structures. One such incident was described by the fifteenth-century cleric Johannes Busch:

> …in the choir behind the altar where [the women] stand and in their seats, most of the sisters each had images of Christ and the saints, both sculpted and painted, for their own devotion. All of which we thence removed and placed toward the east in the space between their choir and the church, so that all could see them equally, have devotion from them in common and not in private in the manner to which they were accustomed.[31]

One of the inherent dualities of the jésueau form is the juxtaposition of an intimately scaled object decorated with motifs that recall the largest and grandest of spiritual places: the Gothic cathedral.[32] While the architectural ornament certainly has iconographical associations, for religious communities of women the decoration also references metaphorical descriptions of their institutions as a means of fostering

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[30] Could jésueaux have been small in scale to match the small scale of the dwellings of nuns/beguines? While this is possible, evidence suggests it was not the primary correlation with the size of the devotional cribs. Beguines could (and did) live in their own homes or in larger clustered communities within the city which did not restrict space in the manner of a traditional monastic cell. See Galloway, "Beguine Communities in Northern France," p. 96. Anabel Thomas' study of female monastic communities in Italy contains descriptions of the dwelling spaces of nuns which suggests that these were not necessarily restrictive in their size. See Thomas, *Art and Piety in the Female Religious Communities of Renaissance Italy*, pp. 113–14.

[31] Winston-Allen, *Convent Chronicles*, pp. 84–85. In addition to the removal or redistribution of works of art, male clerics removed documents that reflected older histories or traditions that they felt were inappropriate. See Winston-Allen, pp. 199–200.

[32] The saturation of Gothic-style ornament on late medieval architectural structures and objects has led some scholars to question its efficacy as a purveyor of strong symbolic meaning. Perhaps the best-known work to employ such an inquisitive methodology is Jan Baptist Bedaux, *The Reality of Symbols: Studies in the Iconology of Netherlandish Art 1400–1800* (The Hague: Gary Schwartz/SDU, 1990). However, many scholars embrace an understanding of how Gothic ornament retained symbolic meaning and evoked theological concepts despite (or perhaps because of) its pervasiveness. Such interpretations are particularly prevalent in examinations of devotional art where the supposition is that the worshipper was actively engaged in looking for deeper meanings. The most comprehensive study of how the devotional mindset spurred theological understandings of everyday objects is Henk van Os, *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe 1300–1500* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

faith in the missions undertaken by members in the face of criticisms and attempts at reforms. In a book of sermons written specifically for women, Elisabeth Muntprat (d. 1531) explains this metaphorical construct:

> Jesus Christ, our own heavenly spouse, we desire to place here as a solid foundation stone and underpinning on which all heavenly edifices, not made by hands but by the grace of the Holy Spirit, are built. In the words of St. Paul, He is a right-angled cornerstone—for He rules all things with His power ordering them harmoniously and strongly—and a keystone, which holds together in the bond of love all those who give themselves to his honor. The same, who through His mercy in this place has begun to work His grace and planted our worthy convent, we ask that He will water it with His sweet, loving spirit…so that those who come after us may know and understand how our worthy convent was established and has grown…that what our predecessors built up with such great effort shall not fall into decline, but rather the earnestness and love of spirituality, which our predecessors possessed shall with God's help grow in us and in those who follow after us to the increase of the Holy Observance.[33]

Although Muntprat and others attempted to articulate the past stability and future viability of their institutions, many remained critical of the sincerity or ability of females in religious communities. The beguines, as a result of the informality and flexibility of their communities, were particular targets of vitriolic and satirical attacks. Thirteenth-century Parisian poet Rutebeuf chided:

> If a beguine marries, that is her vocation, because her vows or profession are not for life. Last year she wept, now she prays, next year she'll take a husband. Now she is Martha, then she is Mary; now she is chaste, then she gets a husband.[34]

Rutebeuf's criticisms mirrored the concerns of many church officials who expressed discomfort with female desires to express spirituality through a variety of both active and contemplative means, thus frequently shifting roles. Ironically, while male clerics often felt the *vita activa* was inappropriate for females, they questioned the ability of women to engage in the *vita contemplativa* without male guidance or

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[33] Excerpt from the *Sister-Book of St. Katharina, St. Gall* see Winston-Allen, *Convent Chronicles*, p. 198.

[34] Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, p. 119.

supervision.[35] Most nuns and beguines, however, seem to have rejected church officials' concerns and embraced expressing their spirituality through multifaceted devotional and ministerial activities. Jésueaux reflect the philosophy that women in many religious communities adopted: one that accepted that spirituality can operate on many different levels and be demonstrated in a variety of ways.

The decoration of a jésueau from the convent of Marches-les-Dames near Namur (fig. 3.2) invites the worshipper to contemplate spiritual and theological dualities as part of the devotional experience and thus evidences nuns' comfort with shifting roles and expectations. This jésueau is the smallest surviving example of the form and the most precious in terms of its cost and materials. The tiny crib measures 12.6 cm high, 12 cm long, and 8 cm wide, and is composed of cast, embossed, and gilt silver.[36] The anonymous metalsmith from Liège who crafted the sculpture skillfully manipulated ornament and texture to suggest the interplay of organic and inorganic forms. The burnished surfaces of the bedposts of the crib and the bells attached to the crib rails recall the solid, lifeless materials of stone and metal used to create church buildings and liturgical accoutrements, while the tripartite foliate designs of the central support post of the crib and the headboard and footboard evoke the living, growing structures of plants and trees. A similar duality occurs in the juxtaposition of decorations referencing secular and sacred being/belonging. Hanging from the side rails of the crib are heraldic pendants emblazoned with the coats-of-arms of fifteenth-century families which temporalize the jésueau as evidence of the genealogy of a particular nun.[37] These references to the nun's worldly family co-exist with depictions of her spiritual sisters—St. Catherine and St. Barbara[38]—on the headboard and footboard of the crib. Furthermore, paired depictions of Sts. Catherine and Barbara were understood as representations of the active (Barbara) versus

[35] For a discussion of this issue as it relates to the Dominican order see Maiju Lehmijoki-Gardner, *Worldly Saints: Social Interaction of Dominican Penitent Women in Italy, 1200–1500* (Helsinki: Suomen Historiallinen Seura, 1999).

[36] van Os, *The Art of Devotion*, p. 102.

[37] Niffle-Anciaux, *Les Repos de Jésus*, p. 107.

[38] For a discussion of works of art from the eleventh through fifteenth centuries which include depictions of Sts. Catherine and Barbara to address female worshippers see Sharon E.J. Gerstel, "Painted Sources for Female Piety in Medieval Byzantium" *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 52 (1998), pp. 89–111.

Fig. 3.2 Anonymous Liège Artist. *Jésueau.* Silver gilt, embossed and cast. Early 15th century. Musée des Arts Anciens, Namur. Photo: courtesy of Musée des Arts Anciens, Namur.

contemplative (Catherine) life.[39] The realms of earthly and heavenly power are visualized through the repeated motif of the orb on the jésueau. The infant Christ, wearing a large crown, grasps an orb in his left hand symbolizing his role as king of heaven. Floating above Him, at the ends of two poles attached to the inner sides of the bed posts,

[39] van Os, *The Art of Devotion*, p. 34. For a discussion of works of art aimed towards a female monastic audience that include religious figures representing the active and contemplative lives see Dominique Rigaux, "The Franciscan Tertiaries at the Convent of Sant' Anna at Foligno" *Gesta* 31/2 (1992), p. 95.

are orbs displaying the dangling letters "c" and "k," again, perhaps an allusion to the secular power of the nun's family.[40] The juxtaposition of symbols of sacred and secular power structures on the jésueau reveals one of the expanded functions of later medieval devotions: to define and confirm socio-political structures.[41]

The placement of heraldic and religious symbols on the Marches-les-Dames crib is not structured to facilitate a single point of view. To fully understand the social and theological connections of the imagery the worshipper must touch, rotate and manipulate the crib to investigate its messages. Touching jésueaux activated nuns' and beguines' devotional experiences, enhanced the depth of their *vita contemplativa*, and reinforced the importance of their *vita activa*.

The Efficacy of Touch

In an essay on the historical perceptions of touch in Early Modern Europe, Elizabeth D. Harvey summarizes that the sense was,

> …associated with authoritative scientific, medical, and even religious knowledge, and it often expresses in synecdochic form creative powers (the artist's "touch"). Tactile contact is central to religious representation; it is evident in depictions that range from the *Noli me tangere* topos to doubting Thomas's touching of Christ's wounds to the figuration of religious healing, all of which signify the dialectic between materiality and resurrection, between physical and spiritual contamination or cure.[42]

This understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of tactility during the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance suggests the complex associations that the touching of jésueaux could evoke for female worshippers. In an environment where the combination of the active and the passive spiritual lives being pursued by women in religious communities was being challenged, interaction with jésueaux during private devotions was intended to mimic (and empower) the worldly interactions of the nuns and beguines who used them.

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[40] Niffle-Anciaux, *Les Repos de Jésus*, p. 106.

[41] Richard Kieckhefer, "Major Currents in Late Medieval Devotion" in Jill Raitt, Bernard McGinn, and John Meyendorff, eds. *Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation* (Oxford: Taylor and Francis, 1987), p. 101.

[42] Elizabeth D. Harvey, ed., *Sensible Flesh: On Touch in Early Modern Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), p. 1.

An understanding of the theological significance of touch for medieval nuns and beguines is asserted in texts that record the visionary experiences of women. Thirteenth-century beguine Hadewijch of Antwerp wrote vernacular mystical poetry and also documented and commented upon the character of her visions. These works were published throughout the fourteenth century testifying to their widespread appeal for female worshippers.[43] Hadewijch advocated throughout her writings that worshippers should aspire to achieve "divine touch" and she defined this ability to touch God as the highest level of devotional/visionary experience.[44]

Jésueaux, with their dolls of the infant Jesus, offered nuns and beguines the opportunity to "touch God" during their worship activities. A 1344 account of the Dominican nun Margaretha Ebner describing an encounter she had with a small wooden statue of the Christ Child in her possession records how such dolls were manipulated as part of the devotional experience:

> I saw the child playing in its cradle [whereupon] I lifted him with joy out of the crib and stood him in my lap. He was a dear child. Then I said, 'Kiss me, so I will forget that you have disturbed me.' Then he fell upon my neck and held me and kissed me.[45]

Other parts of Ebner's writings indicate that her Jesus doll was demanding of her time and attention, requesting to be held and suckled. Similarly, the early fourteenth-century *Meditations on the Life of Christ* contains a section addressed to a Poor Clare that advises her:

> You also, kneel and adore your lord God, then his mother, and salute the holy and venerable Joseph respectfully. Then kiss the feet of the infant Jesus who is laid in his bed, and ask our Lady to give him to you and allow you to pick him up. Receive him and hold him in your arms. Look at his face with attention and kiss it with respect, take joy in this with confidence… Then give him back to his mother and look how well she suckles him, cares for him, and serves him in all things with

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[43] Mary A. Suydam, "The Touch of Satisfaction: Visions and the Religious Experience According to Hadewijch of Antwerp" *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 12/2 (Fall 1996), p. 5.

[44] Suydam, "The Touch of Satisfaction," p. 24. Donald Duclow has suggested that Hadewijch's visions may have inspired Meister Eckhart's philosophies on visionary experience, especially as they relate to the Eucharist. Donald Duclow, "The Hungers of Hadewijch and Eckhart" *The Journal of Religion* 80/3 (July 2000), pp. 421–41.

[45] Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *The Northern Renaissance* (London: Phaidon, 2004), p. 131.

> solicitude and wisdom. Thus, you also, keep yourself ready to help her if you can.[46]

A 1488 devotional manual published in Antwerp titled *On the Spiritual Childhood of Jesus* contained woodcut pictures of women lifting the infant Jesus from his crib with the instruction:

> One now gathers up this sweet little child Jesus and lifts Him from His crib. As He Himself said, one must lift up the Son of Man so that all those who believe in Him do not perish, but may have eternal life.[47]

The desirability and popularity of touching devotional statues of the infant Christ is documented in a warning given by the Netherlandish beguine Maria van Hout to one of her fellow beguines: "Your sister has so long played with the little child Jesus, but now she must stand with Him under the cross."[48] Jeffrey Chipps Smith noted that nuns and beguines, "In imitation of the Virgin Mary…tended the infant Christ through their thoughts, words and gestures."[49] The ministrations, however, particularly the suckling, of Jesus dolls lifted from the jésueaux by female worshippers may have had significance beyond paying homage to the Virgin through traditional mothering activities. According to Bernard of Clairvaux's early twelfth-century sermons on the Song of Songs, metaphorical references to Christ as a mother who breastfeeds were intended to convey how Jesus encouraged spiritual growth through nourishment of the soul. Bernard explained that the bridegroom (soul) in the Song of Songs praises the bride (Christ who assumes a female role) by extolling, "The richness of the grace that flows from your breasts contributes far more to my spiritual progress than the biting reprimands of my superiors."[50] Bernard's sermons were directed towards a largely monastic audience and his casting of Christ in the role of the nursing mother was intended to instruct abbots in

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[46] Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, trans. Lydia Cochrane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), p. 323.

[47] van Os, *The Art of Devotion*, p. 102.

[48] Smith, *The Northern Renaissance*, p. 133.

[49] Smith, *The Northern Renaissance*, p. 131. A good discussion of visions in which nuns touched and tended to the infant Christ can be found in Elizabeth Petroff, "Medieval Women Visionaries: Seven Stages to Power" *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies* 3/1 (Spring 1978), p. 40.

[50] Caroline Walker Bynum, "Jesus as Mother and Abbot as Mother: Some Themes in Twelfth-Century Cistercian Writing" *The Harvard Theological Review* 70/3–4 (July–October 1977), p. 263.

particular in their duties to nurture monastic prelates.[51] Bernard's metaphorical interpretations were adopted and promulgated by other clerics, and their acceptance of his understanding of the shifting of gender associations to denote the assumption of responsibility for spiritual growth no doubt struck a cord with nuns and beguines who desired to minister in a *vita activa*. For these female worshippers the act of lifting and suckling the jésueaux dolls could become an act of transference whereby their nourishment of the Christ Child invested them with an authority to nourish the souls of others.

The ability to attend to others' spiritual needs required the sustenance of the religious communities that educated and advocated for such ministrations. For later medieval convents and beguinages, the support to maintain their activities frequently came through the production and sale of needlework.[52] The bedding found on jésueaux documents the economic power of nuns' and beguines' textile enterprises and elevates their daily work to the realm of devotional experience. Furthermore, the visual and tactile manipulations of jésueaux coverlets and pillows would evoke associations of the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa*.

In his study of how changes in late medieval women's piety is reflected in hagiography of the period Michael Goodich discusses the vital economic role that the production of textiles played in female monastic communities.[53] In fact, although nuns and beguines often sought to follow vows of poverty only a handful of convents were actually given the papal privilege to do so.[54] Thus, needlework came to represent the new ideal of female piety: one driven by the creation and finishing of fabrics. The framing of textile work as a devotional endeavor may be referenced in the particular architectural decoration found on jésueaux. Both the Marches-les-Dames jésueau and the fif-

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[51] Bynum, "Jesus as Mother and Abbot as Mother," p. 271.

[52] Bonnie Young, "Needlework by Nuns: A Medieval Religious Embroidery" *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 8/6 (February 1970), p. 263 and Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, 85–87. Interestingly, Rozsika Parker has argued that the practice of needlework and textile production by both men and women in the Middle Ages gave women a level of equality that disappeared in later centuries as needlework became a primarily feminine occupation. Rozsika Parker, *The Subversive Stitich: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* (New York: Routledge, 1989), p. 17. However, Walter Simons disputes this characterization, see Simons, *Cities of Ladies*, 10.

[53] Michael Goodich, "The Contours of Female Piety in Later Medieval Hagiography" *Church History* 50/1 (March 1981), p. 23.

[54] Goodrich, "The Contours of Female Piety," pp. 23–24.

teenth-century carved and polychromed oak jésueau from the Grand Beguinage in Louvain (fig. 3.3) display unglazed windows in the cathedral forms of the bodies of the cribs. In an age when church windows were filled with richly colored stained glass narratives, the absence of reference to the stained glass panels that created heavenly light and symbolic references for worshippers is conspicuous.[55] Yet, in the convent workrooms where needlework was produced the windows were left uncolored, undecorated, and unglazed to provide optimal lighting for the detailed finishing work required to embroider or finish textiles.[56] Embroiderers' guild statues approved by the provost of the city of Paris in the fourteenth century forbid any man or woman from embroidering after dark less the lack of light compromise the quality of their work; thus, access to the best quality natural light was essential to the textile production process.[57] Nuns or beguines viewing the windows of their jésueaux and fingering the expensive bedding fabrics of the crib would understand the juxtaposition of the two decorations as signifying their active spiritual pursuits.

While the textiles on jésueaux could be a powerful reminder of nuns' and beguines' *vita activa* the fabrics could also be manipulated in a manner which reinforced the meditative theologies of their *vita contemplativa*. Donna Cottrell explained that precious fabrics were such an integral part of Church rituals and display that they became metaphors for Christ and the saints. She also noted, "…exotic textiles woven with gold, silver, and brilliantly-colored threads were believed to possess 'special' properties of light—properties that not only reflected the essence or presence of Divine light, but could direct one's thoughts to the Divine in mystical meditation."[58] The meditations of nuns and beguines fingering the textiles of their jésueaux might turn to the interpretations of twelfth-century theologians Rupert of Deutz and Sicardus of Cremona who argued that fabrics were symbolic

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[55] An excellent discussion of the development and widespread use of stained glass is found in Lawrence Lee, George Seddon, and Francis Stephens, *Stained Glass* (Stamford: Longmeadow Press, 1976). On page 72 the authors recalled that in the twelfth century the Cistercian Order banned colored glass in its abbey churches although St. Bernard admitted they might need it to teach the ignorant.

[56] Kay Staniland, *Medieval Craftsmen: Embroiderers* (London: British Museum Press, 1991), p. 32.

[57] Staniland, *Medieval Craftsmen: Embroiderers*, p. 13.

[58] Donna Cottrell, "Unraveling the Mystery of Jan van Eyck's Cloths of Honor: The Ghent Altarpiece" in: Désirée Koslin and Janet Snyder, eds. *Encountering Medieval Textiles and Dress: Objects, Texts, Images* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 175.

Fig. 3.3 Anonymous Brabant Artist. *Jésueau.* Carved and polychromed oak, copper gilt, silver gilt, painted parchment, and silk embroidered with seed pearls, gold thread, tinsel, and translucent enamels. *15th century. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.* Photo: courtesy of Art Resource.

of the Bride of Christ and specifically the role the Church plays as the Bride of Christ.[59] The cloth and bride association would be particularly emphasized for the nun who owned the Marche-les-Dames jésueau with its depiction of St. Catherine who experienced a vision in which she was married to the infant Christ. Similarly, the beguine who owned the Louvain jésueau may have been encouraged to use its elaborately embroidered bedcover to reenact the rituals surrounding the Nativity depicted on its headboard. She may have lifted the coverlet and hung it from the bell cords strung from the bedposts or over the head or footboard of the crib to create a cloth of honor as a backdrop for a standing presentation of the Christ child doll.[60] Or, in emulation of late medieval mystery plays she could have covered the baby Jesus with the embroidered fabric and then dramatically revealed his form or used the textile as swaddling cloth to mimic the actions of the Virgin Mary at Christ's birth.[61] Fifteenth-century mystic Margery Kempe witnessed women paying homage to Christ by dressing dolls of the infant Jesus during a pilgrimage to Italy and records that the sight of these gentle devotions moved her to tears.[62] Nuns and beguines who touched the expensive textiles of their jésueaux and manipulated the

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[59] Rebecca Martin, *Textiles in Daily Life in the Middle Ages* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), p. 11.

[60] The use of the cloth of honor as a backdrop for both sacred and secular figures is well-documented in late medieval chronicles and images. For the prevalence of cloth of honor displays and the posing of figures in front of them see Andrew Brown and Graeme Small, *Court and Civic Society in the Burgundian Low Countries c. 1420–1530* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007) and Jeffrey Chipps Smith "The Practical Logistics of Art: Thoughts on the Commissioning, Displaying, and Storing of Art at the Burgundian Court" in Laurinda Dixon, (ed.), *In Detail: New Studies of Northern Renaissance Art in Honor of Walter S. Gibson* (Tournhout: Brepols, 1998), pp. 27–48. For a discussion of the display of devotional works of art in front of cloths of honor see Stephan Kemperdick, *Rogier van der Weyden* (Cologne: Könemann Verlagsgellschaft, 1999), p. 121. A painting of a small-scale *Madonna and Child* statue in front of such a cloth of honor can be seen in Josse Lieferinx's *Saint Irene Nurses Saint Sebastian* dated 1497–1498 in the collection of the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

[61] Henk van Os, "The Madonna and the Mystery Play" *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 5/1,2 (1971), pp. 12–19. I thank Rebecca Rolph for suggesting to me that the fact that extant jésueaux dolls tend to have heads that are large in proportion to their bodies may have encouraged swaddling the dolls with fabrics that would visually correct their proportions. For a discussion of dressing dolls as part of marriage and fertility rituals see Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, p. 319.

[62] Nicholas Orme, "The Culture of Children in Medieval England" *Past & Present* 148 (August 1995), p. 56.

fabrics to stimulate their devotional and visionary experiences reinforced the power of their creative acts in needlework to fulfill their spiritual and secular missions.

The Sound of Power

Nuns and beguines who faced clerical resistance to their efforts at ministering to those in need rarely acquiesced meekly and halted their activities. Instead, they manipulated liturgical and devotional objects in a manner that communicated their commitment to pursue active and contemplative avenues of devotion. The bells attached to jésueaux symbolized feminine control over their spiritual missions and also reminded nuns and beguines of their socio-political importance.

The sounding of bells heralded some of the most important liturgical rituals of the church and structured certain religious festivals and experiences.[63] As early as the ninth century the ringing of bells was incorporated into death rituals that marked the burial and remembrance dates of those passed.[64] The sound of bells also accompanied formal processionals enacted as part of religious feast days.[65] Finally, bells were regularly sounded during civic processions that welcomed political leaders to town or marked significant transitions of political power.[66]

The interaction between worshipper and jésueau bells could take two possible forms: deliberate and involuntary. These two opposing methods of generating sound complimented the symbolic dualities of the devotional cribs. The deliberate ringing of bells on jésueaux no doubt reminded nuns and beguines of occasions when members of female monastic communities sounded chimes—most of these instances marked moments of spiritual authority. During a vision the thirteenth-century beguine Marie d'Oignies was ordered to ring bells in honor of

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[63] For a good history of the evolution of the use of bells in the Christian tradition see Bonnie Young, "A Medieval Bell" *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 11/10 (June 1953), pp. 293–96.

[64] Anne Bagnall Yardley, *Performing Piety: Musical Culture in Medieval English Nunneries* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 105.

[65] Yardley, *Performing Piety*, p. 120.

[66] Edmund Bowles, "Musical Instruments in Civic Processions during the Middle Ages" *Acta Musicologica* 33/2 (April–December 1961), pp. 147–61.

St. Gertrude of Nivelles.[67] The ringing not only hailed the sanctity of Gertrude but also proclaimed the reward Marie d'Oignies received as a result of her devotions. The use of bells to declare heightened spiritual power within female monastic communities was demonstrated by the public ringing of bells upon the election of abbesses.[68]

The placement of bells on certain jésueaux practically guaranteed their sounding whenever a nun or beguine touched the object. The fifteenth-century carved and polychromed oak jésueau from the Grand Beguinage in Louvain has rows of tiny silver bells on twisted, gilded copper cords strung between the angel finials at the top of the bedposts.[69] At only 38 cm high it would be inevitable that the beguine reaching into the crib to lift the Christ child doll[70] would hit one of the strands of bells causing them to sound. The combination of elevating the infant Jesus and the noise of the bells as well as the visual and tactile inspection of the jésueau would have invoked a number of powerful associations in the mind of the female worshipper.

Edouard Niffle-Anciaux noted that the bells on devotional cribs were most likely intended to reference the bells sewn onto liturgical vestments.[71] Thus, a beguine who lifted the Christ child from the jésueau and sounded the bells as her hand, wrist, or arm brushed the clustered cords would be directly imitating the motions and associated kinetic chiming of the priest elevating the host during the Mass.[72] This mimesis made a significant statement about the relationship between women and the enactment of the Mass. While only male priests had the

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[67] Judith Oliver, "'Gothic' Women and Merovingian Desert Mothers" *Gesta* 32/2 (1993), p. 12.

[68] Kate Lowe, "Elections of Abbesses and Notions of Identity in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Italy" *Renaissance Quarterly* 54/2 (Summer 2001), p. 397.

[69] Detroit Institute of Arts, *Flanders in the Fifteenth Century: Art and Civilization* (Detroit: Detroit Institute of Arts, 1960), p. 343.

[70] The Christ child doll is missing but was with the crib as late as 1894 when it was in the private collection of Albert Figdor in Vienna. Descriptions of the doll record it as made of wax and wearing swaddling clothes and a linen cap. The doll had disappeared by the time the jésueau was given to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York as part of the Blumka Collection in 1974. Detroit Institute of Arts, *Flanders in the Fifteenth Century*, p. 344.

[71] Niffle-Anciaux includes several pages of inventory descriptions of liturgical garments adorned with bells from the twelfth through sixteenth centuries in support of his discussion. Niffle-Anciaux, *Les Repos de Jésus*, pp. 79–82.

[72] Fifteenth-century Dominican Giovanni Dominici advised Florentine mothers that the religious education of their sons should include mimicking the actions of the priest at Mass by setting up a domestic altar and having the boy sing and ring bells. Klapisch-Zuber, *Women, Family, and Ritual in Renaissance Italy*, p. 321.

power to actually perform the communion ceremony, medieval literature documents that women overwhelmingly experienced Eucharistic visions and associated miracles lending them much greater spiritual sensitivity and authority.[73] In fact, of the fifty-five late medieval visions that rewarded worshippers with the experience of being given the Eucharist directly by Christ himself, forty-five of those were received by women.[74] A nun or beguine grasping the body of the Jesus doll and hearing the chiming of the bells of the jésuseau as she elevated his small body would no doubt hope that her actions could be rewarded by such a vision the next time she received the Eucharist.[75] Increasing the likelihood of such visionary experience, particularly in the context of the sounding of bells, is the presence of musical angels[76] on the finials of the Louvain Beguinage jésueau. A profusion of later medieval writings from St. Francis' *Canticle of the Sun* to Jacobus of Voragine's *Golden Legend* describe music as a stimulus for mystical experience or describe visions using musical metaphors.[77]

While the chiming of bells in conjunction with lifting the Christ child figure could have called to mind the ritual of the Mass and associated Eucharistic visions for nuns and beguines, the precarious stringing of the instruments on the crib insured that every time the object was moved the bells would sound. Simply rotating the jésueau to inspect the subject matter of its ornaments would create a cascade of tinkling that reverberated in all directions. The infant Christ reclining in the cradle would be encircled by sound which would evoke the type

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[73] Caroline Walker Bynum, "Fast, Feast, and Flesh: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women" *Representations* 11 (Summer 1985), p. 3.

[74] Bynum, "Fast, Feast, and Flesh," p. 3.

[75] The Louvain Beguinage jésueau has a relic container in the body of the crib. Edouard Niffle-Anciaux refers to this as a monstrance although he offers no specific support for this particular liturgical function for the crib. Niffle-Anciaux, *Les Repos de Jésus*, p. 99. A good discussion of how art and architectural forms developed and changed in response to the popularity of late medieval women's Eucharistic devotion is found in Caroline Bruzelius, "Hearing is Believing: Clarissan Architecture, *ca*. 1213–1340" *Gesta* 31/2 (1992), pp. 83–91.

[76] The only description of the musical instruments held by the angels on the Louvain Beguinage jésueau is found in the catalogue entry by the Detroit Institute of Arts that notes there are "four angels playing musical instruments: two, fashioned guitars, one a psaltry, and one a viol." Detroit Institute of Arts, *Flanders in the Fifteenth Century*, p. 343. For a history of the psaltry see Christopher Page, "Biblical Instruments in Medieval Manuscript Illuminations" *Early Music* 5/3 (July 1977), pp. 299–309.

[77] Emanuel Winternitz, "Secular Musical Practice in Sacred Art" *Early Music* 3/3 (July 1975), p. 224.

of resounding and all-surrounding bell ringing that occurred in cities during civic processions and perhaps reminded the female worshipper not only of the importance of Christ as worldly king but the divine right of rulership assumed by most political leaders of the later Middle Ages.[78] As many nuns and beguines came from the ruling classes,[79] the combination of the multiplicity of bells with the inspection of images of rulership would highlight their familial ties and perhaps serve as a reminder to offer prayers for their worldly families.

If we return to the jésueau from the Grand Beguinage of Louvain and consider the iconography of the decorations a theme of genealogy and political authority becomes apparent. The headboard of the crib is adorned with a relief carving of the Nativity with the Annunciation to the Shepherds, the footboard displays the Adoration of the Magi, and the embroidered bedding displays a Tree of Jesse on the coverlet and an Agnus Dei surrounded by the symbols of the Four Evangelists on the pillow.[80] As the worshipper rotated the jésueau to view its narrative scenes and involuntarily sounded its myriad bells the juxtaposition of manipulation and ringing might call to mind civic processions where movement and the chiming of bells heralded society's elite. The details of such a procession are recorded in a 1461 chronicle describing an official entry into the city of Paris arranged for King Louis IX. As the king entered the city bells in the towers of churches all over the city rang and the monarch and his entourage paraded through the streets to the official welcome site at the Cathedral of Notre-Dame.[81] A beguine interacting with her jésueau would contemplate the intersections of divine and divinely ordained rulership and how it

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[78] The best general work on the subject is John Neville Figgis, *The Divine Right of Kings* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965). Historians debate the issue, especially as it relates to the formation of modern systems of government. For a brief synopsis of some recent historical opinions on the topic see Glenn Burgess, "The Divine Right of Kings Reconsidered," *The English Historical Review* 107/425 (October 1992), pp. 837–61.

[79] Galloway, "Beguine Communities in Northern France," p. 94, Winston-Allen, *Convent Chronicles*, p. 30, and also the introduction of Kathleen Garay and Madeleine Jeay, *The Life of Saint Douceline, A Beguine of Provence* (Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2001).

[80] For an excellent analysis of the specifics of the iconography of all of these subjects see Gertrud Schiller, *Iconography of Christian Art Volume I*, trans. Janet Seligman (Greenwich: New York Graphic Society, 1971).

[81] Edmund Bowles, "Musical Instruments in Civic Processions during the Middle Ages" *Acta Musicologica* 33/2 (April–December 1961), p. 147.

was celebrated through public processions, ritual movements and the sounding of bells.

Collective Power: The Afterlife of Jésueaux

The individualized decorations on jésueaux situate them within the devotional sphere (and lifetime) of a particular female worshipper. What happened to these objects when a nun or beguine passed away and how did the functions of the jésueaux alter in response to changes in ownership, use or display?

Most jésueaux were gifted to convent or beguinage chapels or treasuries upon the death of the individual women who brought them into the community.[82] The bequest of these devotional cribs was an act which linked nuns and beguines to the practices of prominent female laywomen who often gifted their beds and the expensive textiles that adorned them to convents upon their passing.[83] The heraldic references incorporated into the decoration of both laywomen's beds and nuns' and beguines' jésueaux served a votive function and ensured the perpetuation of memorial prayers in honor of the donatrix's family. In addition, some jésueaux were converted to reliquaries which could be used during feast day processions.[84] The initials and coats-of-arms on the cribs became substitutes for the physical presence of the women who once walked in these processions as a group demonstrating their faith to the community. The clusters of jésueaux given to convents and beguinages thus signified the collective power of the religious community and its active and contemplative endeavors.

Jésueaux transferred from individual ownership to community ownership maintained their interactive qualities although the character of these interactions changed from personally meditative to publically performative. As the form of jésueaux derived from miracles associated with St. Francis' celebration of the Feast of the Nativity, the cribs were easily integrated into celebrations of the birth of Christ. Henk van

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[82] van Os, *The Art of Devotion*, p. 102.

[83] Martin, *Textiles in Daily Life in the Middle Ages*, p. 43.

[84] van Os, *The Art of Devotion*, p. 102. Niffle-Anciaux's book contains a chapter on reliquaries in the form of cradles/cribs that contained the relics of the Massacre of the Innocents and while this form has some iconographical similarities with jésueaux the circumstances of their commissioning, use and display were different. Niffle-Anciaux, *Les Repos de Jésus*, pp. 115–20.

Os recalled that as late as the nineteenth century nuns in a Brussels convent were using jésueaux as part of their Nativity festivals. The cradles would be displayed flanked by candles and nuns would kneel and rock them before beginning their prayers.[85] The individual touch of the original owner of the object is thus transformed to the collective touches of nuns in the community. The thirteenth-century text *Ordinarium Ecclesiae* described Paduan Nativity celebrations in which their holy image was covered with precious cloth and was revealed to the assembled worshippers after the ringing of bells and the lighting of candles.[86] In this case, the congregation bears collective witness to the original type of private devotional interactions with the object making the interactions publically ritualized.

Conclusion

The visual, tactile and aural interactions of nuns and beguines with their jésueaux facilitated a wide range of devotional experiences that reflected female worshippers' unique sacred and secular concerns. The narrative and heraldic iconographies of devotional cribs reminded nuns and beguines of their families' social status and encouraged cognizance of the need to offer prayers for their family members' secular concerns. The decorations also offered nuns and beguines an opportunity to examine their connections to their spiritual families, particularly female saints and visionaries, who served as exemplars for their religious lives. The sounding of bells and the touching of the infant Jesus dolls and expensive textiles of the jésueaux provided female worshippers an avenue for exploring the intersections of the *vita activa* and the *vita contemplativa*. These manipulations allowed for contemplation of Eucharistic visionary experiences and also encouraged women to assume an active role in ministrations to their sacred and secular communities through reflection on their economic contributions to their institutions through textile production. The decorations and interactive components of jésueaux were constructed to meet the devotional needs of an individual nun or beguine during her lifetime but easily transitioned to serve votive and ritual functions within her community after her passing.

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[85] van Os, *The Art of Devotion*, p. 102.
[86] van Os, "The Madonna and the Mystery Play," p. 8.

PART II

INSISTENT IMAGES AND SPACES

4. ILLUSIONISM AND INTERACTIVITY: MEDIEVAL INSTALLATION ART, ARCHITECTURE AND DEVOTIONAL RESPONSE

Laura D. Gelfand

> And when they came upon the Mount of Calvary she fell down that she might not stand nor kneel but wallowed and wrestled with her body…and cried with a loud voice as though her heart should burst asunder, for in the city of her soul she saw verily and freshly how our Lord was crucified.… And she had so great compassion and so great pain to see our Lord's pain that she might not keep herself from crying and roaring though she should 'a been dead therefore.
>
> Margery Kempe, *c.* 1430s.[1]

> The most moving portion of the day was the Passion. I was brought to tears as this reminded me of all that Jesus endured on our behalf. And then more tears flowed at the realization of His victory over sin and death and the anticipation of His return for us!!
>
> Wendi, Canton, OH, 2008.[2]

The story of fifteenth-century devotional art is in many ways the story of a wish for, and achievement of, heightened participatory and sensory experiences. In attempting to create emotional connections between viewers and devotional objects, artists working in all media discovered that greater illusionism was the key to achieving this goal. Patrons, in turn, commissioned work from artists who were able to produce the most authentic simulacra of holy sites and events. In this essay I suggest that the naturalism explored by early fifteenth-century artists originated in their patrons' desire to achieve the most emotionally and physically engaged experience possible when contemplating biblical narratives. This essay focuses specifically on illusionism in fifteenth-century, site-specific architectural installations: these locations

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[1] *The Book of Margery Kempe*, ed. B. Windeatt (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2004), pp. 162–63. The translation from the original English is mine.

[2] Promotional testimony from the web site of The Holy Land Experience in Orlando, Florida. http://www.holylandexperience.com/discoverhle/liveshows.html. July 22, 2008.

incorporate their locations, architecture, sculpture, paintings and every other element of decoration in order to achieve their naturalistic effects. This study reveals that the most "renaissance" of artistic developments—the move toward greater illusionism—is in actuality the product of late medieval devotional practices and their attendant demands for profound emotional engagement.

This chapter focuses on three fifteenth-century monuments, examining how their innovative approaches to representation and participatory devotional practices were believed to foster more efficacious empathic responses. These monuments: the Chartreuse de Champmol outside of Dijon; the Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges; and the *sacro monte* in Varallo, were built respectively at the beginning, middle, and end of the fifteenth century, and each were the site of performative devotional practices. The monuments in Bruges and Varallo are also specifically connected to a strong desire to visit the increasingly inaccessible Holy Land. We will look at the design of these sites as well as their decoration and furnishings to establish how they functioned for a variety of audiences. The ways in which these sites manipulated visiting devotees and used illusionism to further their affective goals is of critical importance. Finally, it is important to acknowledge that the monuments chosen here are only a few of the many that might profitably be examined in this context, and that the implications of this study extend beyond these examples to encompass a tremendous number of late medieval and early modern sites.

The monuments discussed in this essay provided their medieval visitors with the opportunity to experience three different types of pilgrimage. Generally, pilgrimage has been divided into two types, the most familiar being active pilgrimage, in which the pilgrim physically travels to a sacred destination. A second type, to which the term virtual pilgrimage often been applied, describes a number of different devotional practices involving either imagination or motion without travel.[3] However, the term virtual pilgrimage is too broad and anachronistic. Rather, it makes more sense to identify two additional and distinct types of pilgrimage: performative pilgrimage and imaginative pilgrimage. Performative pilgrimage describes physically engaged

[3] Many authors have used this terminology, a good example is Katherine M. Rudy, "A Guide to Mental Pilgrimage: Paris, Bibliothèque de L'Arsenal Ms. 212," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 63 (2000), pp. 497, 509, 513.

pilgrimage that does not involve travel to a particular destination; examples include walking or dancing the labyrinth, moving through the Stations of the Cross or any of a number of other activities. Imaginative pilgrimage involves a contemplative activity like reading a text that takes the devotee on an imagined tour of the Holy Land; examples include *vade mecum* (or "come with me") books and the maps of Matthew Paris.[4] Also falling into this category are devotional practices associated with works like Memling's *Scenes from the Passion of Christ* in Turin (Galleria Sabauda, 1470–1471), a *Simultanbilder* in which the devotee is led through the events of the Passion in a series of narrative scenes. Here, as in many similar examples, the exercise of contemplating these events is efficacious in earning indulgences for the imaginative pilgrim who completes them.[5]

Medieval pilgrims often combined two or three of these types of pilgrimages within a single devotional experience; for example reading a *vade mecum* while visiting the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. Widespread enthusiasm for places or activities that could earn devotees indulgences was common during the Middle Ages and each of the three types of pilgrimage could be indulgenced. Importantly, indulgences are not a forgiveness for sin; rather they exploit the superabundant merits of the saints to grant forgiveness for the punishment allotted for sin.[6] Indulgences allow the devout to avoid time in the afterlife that would otherwise be spent enduring purgatorial torment. This highly influential system was developed shortly after the popularization of the concept of Purgatory in the late twelfth century.[7]

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[4] For an excellent discussion of this idea see Daniel Connolly, "Imagined Pilgrimage in the Itinerary Maps of Matthew Paris," *Art Bulletin* 81 (1999), pp. 598–622.

[5] *Simultanbilder* have been the subject of numerous studies. See the essay by Henry Luttikhuizen in this volume and Vida Hull's essay, "Spiritual Pilgrimage in the Paintings of Hans Memling" in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, eds. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe (Leiden: Brill Academic Press, 2005), pp. 29–50.

[6] Among the many sources on indulgences one of the most informative is Nikolaus Paulus, *Indulgences as a Social Factor in the Middle Ages* (New York: The Devin-Adain Company, 1922). See also, Robert W. Saffern, *The Penitents' Treasury* (Scranton and London: The University of Scranton Press, 2007), and R.N. Swanson, ed., *Promissory notes on the treasury of merits: Indulgences in late Medieval Europe* (Leiden: Brill Academic Press, 2006). Additionally, see the essays by Walter Gibson, Amy Morris, and Susan Ward in volume I of *Push Me, Pull You* to see how indulgences could be applied to prints, paintings and sculptures.

[7] Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, trans. A. Goldhammer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984).

The way in which movement through Purgatory was structured and promulgated by the Church created an "economy of death" that had a profound effect on pilgrimage practices and has yet to be fully incorporated into modern scholarship.[8]

This investigation begins with a discussion of the naturalism found at the Chartreuse de Champmol, the elaborate Carthusian monastery founded by Philip the Bold (1342–1404) outside of Dijon around 1383.[9] (fig. 4.1) The monastery was dedicated in 1388 and its primary function, beyond housing the twenty-four Carthusian monks who lived within, was to act as a dynastic mausoleum for the Valois dukes of Burgundy.[10] The Chartreuse de Champmol, however, was also a place of pilgrimage, a fact that seems counterintuitive given the famously reclusive lifestyle of the Carthusians.[11] Yet, spaces for visitors and pilgrims were included in the fabric of the complex from the time of its initial construction and Philip regularly reimbursed the monks for expenses incurred hosting visitors to the monastery. Philip the Bold not only hoped for visitors, but he offset the cost of their accommoda-

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[8] For an excellent examination of how indulgences and perpetual prayer worked in the context of the English church see Simon Roffey, *The Medieval Chantry Chapel: An Archeology* (Woodbridge UK: Boydell Press, 2007).

[9] Whitney S. Stoddard, *Art and Architecture in Medieval France* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1972), p. 336.

[10] Sherry C.M. Lindquist's book, *Agency, Visuality and Society at the Chartreuse de Champmol* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008) provides a new analysis of this monastery. See also Renate Prochno's important and comprehensive book, *Die Kartause von Champmol. Grablege der burgundischen Herzöge (1364–1477)* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 2002).

[11] I have written about the Chartreuse de Champmol as a place of pilgrimage in the chapter, "'Y Me Tarde,' The Valois, Pilgrimage and the Chartreuse de Champmol" in *The Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe*, eds. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe (Leiden: Brill Academic Press, 2005), pp. 563–82. Susie Nash's recent publications cast new light on the monastery and its iconography. See, "Claus Sluter's 'Well of Moses' for the Chartreuse de Champmol reconsidered: part III," *The Burlington Magazine* 150 (2008), pp. 724–41. I am not convinced by Nash's argument that the monastery was not a particularly important place of pilgrimage and that pilgrims did not have access to the Great Cross in the Large Cloister. Incontrovertible evidence for pilgrims at the monastery is found in pilgrim's badges, accommodations for visitors to the monastery and an annual budget for locking devices.

Political aspects of the monastery are succinctly discussed in both Jean-Philippe Lecat, "La Chartreuse de Champmol dans la vie politique de Philippe le Hardi," *Actes des Journées Internationales Claus Sluter* (Dijon: Association Claus Sluter, 1990), pp. 9–11; and Christian de Mérindol, "Art, spritualité et politique: Philippe le Hardi et la Chartreuse de Champmol, nouvel aperçu," *Les Chartreux et l'Art, XIV^e–XVIII^e siécle* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1989), pp. 93–116.

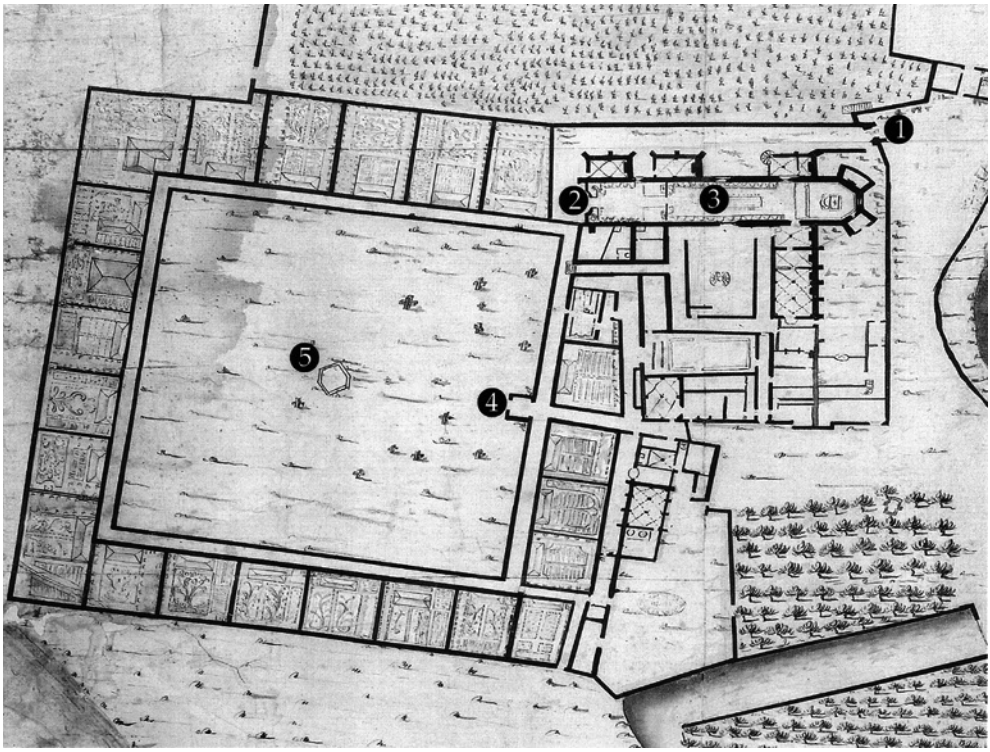

Fig. 4.1 Plan of the Chartreuse de Champmol, Dijon. Photo: public domain image.

tion at the monastery, and pilgrims' badges were created for visitors as well.[12] Security issues raised by numerous visitors to the monastery necessitated annual expenditures on protective locking devices and railings were installed around the ducal tombs in order to preserve their intricate decorations.[13]

[12] Pilgrim souvenirs in the shape of ampullae were created for visitors to the monastery. H.J.E. van Beuningen, *et al.*, *Rotterdam Papers 12, A contribution to medieval archaeology, Heilig en Profaan 2: 1200 Laatmiddeleeuwse Insignes uit openbare en particuliere collectives* (Cothen, The Netherlands: Stichting Middeleeuwse Religieuze en Profane Insignes, 2001), pp. 381–386. Many thanks to Sarah Blick for bringing these important objects to my attention. For complete documentation of the construction and furnishing of the monastery see Prochno, op. cit., and Cyprien Monget, *La Chartreuse de Dijon*, 3 vols. (Tournai: Montreuil-sur-Mer, 1898–1905).

[13] Monget, *Chartreuse de Dijon*, II, p. 149.

The Chartreuse de Champmol became a place of pilgrimage quickly after its construction; the years 1390 and 1399 mark the first times that Philip reimbursed the Carthusians for expenses incurred in housing guests.[14] The number of visitors increased dramatically in the decades following the issuance of papal bulls granting indulgences to visitors.[15] Papal bulls were issued in 1418, 1432, and 1445 granting a 100 days indulgence for prayer performed in the large cloister before the Great Cross every Saturday, Good Friday, and on several other feast days.[16] The desire to amass indulgences was a powerful incentive for pilgrims in the Middle Ages and religious tourism translated into considerable financial resources at the monastery where pilgrims' donations provided important income for the monastic community. Interestingly, both men and women were able to visit the monastery until 1506 when Julius II withdrew this privilege from women.[17] Still, female devotees could obtain the promised indulgences if they sent others for them to make the required financial contribution.

The monument known today as the Moses Well is a fragment of the Great Cross that adorned the large cloister and served as the primary goal of pilgrims.[18] Situated within a fully functioning well was a large hexagonal base encircled by over life-size figures of prophets. This entire pedestal, and all of its figures, was originally elevated so that the viewer's head would have been at the level of the prophets' feet. Currently the entire cross is truncated and the viewer sees the base from a much higher viewpoint than was originally intended: we now see the prophets at eye level, which causes them to seem less physically monumental than they once were. Above the elaborate base, which also features theatrically weeping angels, was a life-size crucifixion scene with Christ on the cross. Life-sized sculptures of Mary Magdalene, the

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[14] Monget, *Chartreuse de Dijon*, I, p. 215. See also, Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality and Society,* p. 192.

[15] The Chartreuse de Champmol was meant to function as a Valois dynastic nexus of power, much like St. Denis just outside of Paris. Elsewhere I have suggested that the first visitors came to show their respect or obeisance to Philip the Bold and his family. See Gelfand, "'Y Me Tarde,' pp. 567–86.

[16] Monget, *Chartreuse de Dijon*, I, pp. 54–55; and Kathleen Morand, *Claus Sluter: Artist at the Court of Burgundy* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991), pp. 341–42.

[17] Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality and Society*, pp. 192–194; Monget, *Chartreuse de Dijon*, I, p. 204.

[18] For additional images see Donna Sadler's essay, "The Well of Moses and Roland Barthes' 'Punctum' of Piety," *Push Me, Pull You* vol. II.

Virgin and John the Baptist may have been placed below the cross.[19] Jean Malouel was responsible for the vivid painting of Sluter's masterwork, some of which has been revealed by the monument's recent restoration.[20] To amplify their verisimilitude the sculpted figures included copper additions such as spectacles for Jeremiah, strings for David's harp and a diadem for the Magdalene.[21]

The text of the papal bull granting indulgences for visitors to the Great Cross makes specific reference to its remarkably illusionistic qualities. The document refers to the figure of Christ specifically as an "*effigiem*," a word that does not appear elsewhere in the monastery's documents.[22] In discussing the meaning of this term Sherry Lindquist cites another use of it by Matthew of Janov around 1490, where it was used to describe sculpture that connotes the actual presence or essence of a being. This quality in Sluter's work is particularly striking for twenty-first century viewers and it must have been even more astounding to the sculptor's own contemporaries. The conjured essence of the holy figures in the Great Cross inspired both the papal bull granting visitors to it indulgences and the pilgrims who came to the Chartreuse de Champmol to take advantage of this promise.

It is safe to assume that few fifteenth-century viewers had ever seen a sculptural group as vividly animated and emotionally compelling. Surely pilgrims must have been engaged by this imagery and perceived

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[19] A few fragments of this upper group were fished out of the well in the nineteenth century, these include the bust of Christ and his legs, as well part of his halo. The titulus, a set of crossed female arms, a fragment of the Magdalen's shoulder, part of St. John's hand and pieces of the cross, drapery and architectural ornament were also found. See Morand, *Claus Sluter*, pp. 343–44. The bust of Christ in the Archeological Museum in Dijon, long thought to be by Sluter has been de-attributed, see Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality and Society*, p. 56, n. 261–262, for a summary and bibliography. Nash suggests a reconstruction of the upper crucifixion group that would have featured only the Magdalene at the foot of the cross, see Nash, "Champmol reconsidered," III (2008), pp. 724–41.

[20] Morand, *Claus Sluter*, p. 340.

[21] Monget, *Chartreuse de Dijon,* I, p. 347.

[22] The bull of 1418 notes, "a certain cross, honorably made, which represents to those who see it a great effigy of the very Passion of the Lord. So that the Christian faithful might in every respect desire it more eagerly and flock to it for the sake of devotion to this same cross, we remit to all those penitents and confessed who will have visited and extended helping hands for the sake of the said cross on Fridays, in our mercy, and following the present custom fifty, and if it be Good Friday, one hundred days of the penances imposed upon them, for as many times as they will have done this." Cited in Sherry Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality and Society,* p. 124, n. 24. Lindquist publishes the translation and original document in n. 24, Monget includes only the original Latin document, Monget, II, pp. 54–55.

the experience as an efficacious aid for achieving their devotional goals. Rather than recalling the events of the Passion from memory or being stimulated to imagine them while contemplating two-dimensional images The Chartreuse de Champmol supplied viewers with the equivalent of a durable and interactive *tableaux vivant*. Just as many crave the thrill ride found in action films and amusement parks, late medieval visitors to the monastery near Dijon were able to experience Christ's Passion in a completely new and dynamic way. The Chartreuse de Champmol did not attract pilgrims who wanted to see important relics; there weren't any there. Visitors came to see Sluter's sculptures which, much like relics, had the capacity to amaze and inspire.

Pilgrims entering the cloister would have moved through a narrow passage decorated with the arms of the Valois founders.[23] Upon entering the cloister they would have seen the Great Cross, which by 1411 was protected by a large, domed wooden covering.[24] The Cross faced the eastern entrance and arriving pilgrims were presented with the most impressive view of the sculpted monument as they entered the cloister.[25] Claus Sluter's naturalistic figures and their compositions, which may relate to contemporary theatrical productions, would have made a compelling sight. The Great Cross has often been connected with contemporary Passion plays and its theatrical qualities are undeniable.[26] An almost proto-Baroque emphasis on dynamism was explored throughout the monastery and is also found in the portal sculptures and the lively recreation of his funerary scene on Philip's tomb. The monastery differed from other contemporary pilgrimage centers in part because of the dramatic experience it provided on a grand scale: the Chartreuse de Champmol was amazing in its verisimilitude and compelling in its ability to stimulate prayer.

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[23] Monget, *Chartreuse de Dijon*, I, p. 347.

[24] Morand, *Claus Sluter,* p. 241. The current structure that protects the Moses Well was erected in 1638. It is not clear when the upper portion of this monument was destroyed and some have suggested that this may have been as early as the sixteenth century during the siege of Dijon by the Swiss, Laurence Blondaux, "Regards sur le Puits de Moise," *Claus Sluter en Bourgogne, Mythe et representations* (Dijon: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon, 1990), pp. 30–33.

[25] Pierre Quarré, "L'implantation du Calvaire du 'Puits de Moise,' à la Chartreuse de Champmol," *Mémoires de la Commission des Antiquites du Departement de la Côte d'Or* 29 (1974/5), pp. 161–166.

[26] Emile Roy, *Le Mystére de la Passion en France du XIV^e^ au XVI^e^ siécle* (Dijon, 1903–1904; repr. Geneva: Slatkine, 1974), p. 437.

Accommodation for pilgrims is found throughout the monastic complex. Twenty-one rings were installed outside the porter's lodge as hitching posts for visitor's horses.[27] The gatehouse through which visitors entered the complex included a large parlor where monks could meet with their guests.[28] The choir in the church had seventy-two choir stalls but because the monastery housed only twenty-four monks and two priors the thirty-four extra seats in the monk's choir were probably intended for ecclesiastical visitors. In fact, the number of seats indicates that the monks were prepared for their guests to outnumber them.

Pilgrims visiting the monastery may have had a single goal in mind, to see and pray before the Great Cross. However, an early form of tourism based on curiosity and reputation may also have played a role in encouraging pilgrimages. The availability of indulgences combined with the promise of a remarkable experience to draw crowds to the monastery. Indeed, in the years around 1400, and for decades after, there was no other place a pilgrim could visit where they could encounter figures with the startlingly lifelike aspects of those at the Chartreuse de Champmol. It is here that we can identify the beginning of a trend that continued and was amplified throughout the fifteenth century: the desire by pilgrims for verisimilitude, for the experience of a theatrical and dynamic site that promoted an emotionally engaging devotional experience.[29] Pilgrims wanted to experience Christ's story in a new way and the artists and architects who were most skilled at illusionistic naturalism were in the best position to provide it; they in turn became some of the most successful artists of the period.

We now direct our attention away from the Chartreuse de Champmol to Bruges and to a consideration of how pilgrimage to Jerusalem inspired remarkable re-creations of its topography and spiritual power. Participatory devotional practices are a key element in the remarkable Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges. (fig. 4.2) The Adornes brothers, Pieter II and Jacob (d. 1464 and 1465 respectively), first began construction of

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[27] Sherry Lindquist, *Patronage, Piety and Politics in the Art and Architectural Programs at the Chartreuse de Champmol in Dijon* (Ph.D diss., Northwestern University, 1995), pp 29–30, 242.

[28] Lindquist, "Patronage, Piety and Politics," p. 243.

[29] In fact, the desire for such an experience is part of the very essence of the Baroque period and one could argue that the trend I identify here is actually the beginning of a desire for illusionistic imagery with an affective bent that continues throughout the sixteenth and into the seventeenth centuries as well.

Fig. 4.2 Exterior Jerusalem Chapel, Bruges, *c.* 1430. Photo: Andrew McAllister Photography.

this unusual building in the middle of the 1420s following a visit to the Holy Land.[30] Like the church at Champmol, the Jerusalem Chapel was meant to serve as a mortuary chapel for the Adornes family, but it was also a testament to their devotion to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem and a reminder of their pilgrimage there. The Jerusalem pilgrimage undertaken by Pieter and Jacob was so interwoven into family tradition that in 1470–1471 Anselme Adornes (1424–1483), Pieter's son, repeated their voyage to Jerusalem with his own son, Jan, who wrote a well-known account of the trip upon his return.[31] Anselme's heart is buried in the tomb in the center of the nave of the Jerusalem Chapel together with the body of his wife, Margaretha vander Banck. Well-preserved, life-size gisants of both, carved in Tournaisian stone, appear atop their shared tomb.[32]

Located outside the medieval walls of Bruges, the Jerusalem Chapel serves to mark the Adornes family's devotion to Jerusalem, but it also testifies to the belief, collectively held by the citizens of Bruges, that

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[30] For a recent and thorough description of the archival and other evidence for the constructions dates see Mitzi Kirkland-Ives, "*Capell nuncapato Jherusalem noviter Brugis*: The Adornes Family of Bruges and Holy Land Devotion," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 39/4 (2008), pp. 1056–1057. There are a number of sources for information on the Jerusalem Chapel including Luc Devliegher, *Les maisons a Bruges; Inventaire descriptif* (Liege, Pierre Mardaga, 1975), which includes a plan of the church and the Adornes home which once stood alongside it, pp. 281–82. Noël Geirnaert's work on the Chapel, based on material in the Bruges archives is essential. See Noël Geirnaert with Andre Vandewalle, eds., *Adornes en Jerusalem. Internationaal level in het 15de en 16de eeuwse Brugge* (Bruges, 1983); and Noël Geirnaert, *Het archeif van de familie Adornes en van de Jeruzalemstichting te Brugge*, (Bruges, 1987). See also Jozef Penninck, *De Jeruzalemkerk te Brugge* (Bruges, Heemkundige Kring, 1977). The Jerusalem Chapel is also briefly discussed in Katherine C. Luber, "Patronage and Pilgrimage: Jan van Eyck, the Adornes Family and Two Paintings of "St. Francis in Prayer," *Bulletin of the Philadelphia Museum of Art* 91 (1998), p. 29. See Ron Spronk regarding the Jan Provoost triptych that was once on the high altar of the Chapel, "The reconstruction of a triptych by Jan Provoost for the Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges," *The Burlington Magazine* (2005), pp. 109–11.

[31] Jacques Heers and Georgette de Groër (eds.*), Itinéraire d'Anselme Adorno en Terre Sainte (1470–1471)* (Paris, 1978); Henri Platelle, "Le pèlerinage en Terre Sainte d'Anselme Adorno (1470–1471) d'après un ouvrage recent," *Mélanges de Science Religieuse* 39 (1982), pp. 19–28.

[32] The tomb was sculpted by Cornelis Tielman, for more on the artist see Jean-Pierre Esther, "Monumentenbeschrijving en bouwgeschiedenis van Jeruzalemkapel," in Geirnaert and Vandewalle, *op. cit*., pp. 65–66. See also J. Gailliard, *Recherches sur l'Eglise Jérusalem à Bruges* (Bruges, 1843), pp. 9–10, and Valentin Vermeersch, *Grafmonumenten te Brugge voor 1578*, 2 (Bruges, 1976), pp. 305–09, no. 310, pls. 142–144.

their city was a simulacrum of Jerusalem.[33] In 1440, a ceremonial entry featured a tableau depicting Bruges as Jerusalem,[34] and when Philip the Good made a triumphal entry into the city in February of 1463, he was taken past a tableau vivant featuring Jerusalem.[35] This staging reflected Philip's desire to wage a Crusade in the Holy Land, but it also likened Philip to Christ and his entrance could be re-read as the entrance of Christ into Jerusalem.[36] An elaborate entry staged for the young Charles V in 1515 included a series of tableaux; the first of these likened the people of Bruges to the chosen people and Charles V to the Messiah. The second represented the portals of the local church of St. Donation with the arc of the covenant, David's gift to Jerusalem, housed within. This was paired with Baldwin "Iron Arm" bringing the relics of St. Donation to Bruges. Finally, the third tableau showed the legend of Thierry d'Alsace receiving the relic of the Holy Blood from the Patriarch of Jerusalem and donating it to the city.[37]

Such one-time events were annually reaffirmed during the Procession of the Holy Blood, which took place on 3 May and reasserted the city of Bruges's identity as a new Jerusalem. During the festival celebrants from all levels of society gathered in the Burg before making their way to the Boeverie Gate and processing around the city. The psalms were recited as the procession moved past various important landmarks. Those participating and observing were encouraged to equate the city of Bruges and its particular locations with the events and places of the Passion. Through this performance time collapsed and the mod-

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[33] I have explored this idea at greater length in "Bruges as Jerusalem, Jerusalem as Bruges: Actual and Imagined Pilgrimage in Fifteenth-century Manuscript Illuminations and Paintings," *Annales d'Histoire de l'Art et d'Archéologie de l'Université libre de Bruxelles*, 28 (2007), pp. 7–24.

[34] Andrew Brown, "Civic Ritual: Bruges and the Counts of Flanders in the Later Middle Ages," *The English Historical Review* 112 (1997), p. 297.

[35] Maximiliaan P.J. Martens, "New Information on Petrus Christus's Biography and on the Patron of his Brussels Lamentation," *Simiolus* 20 (1990/91), pp. 5–23, esp. pp. 9–10.

[36] During the feast of the pheasant, held in 1454, Philip and most members of his court vowed to wage a crusade and retake the Holy Land. The triumphal entry staged by the city of Bruges made reference to this pledge while conveying a number of other symbolic allusions. Yves Lacaze, "Politique méditerranéenne et projets de croisade chez Philippe le Bon: de la chute de Byzance à la victoire chrétienne de Belgrade (mai 1453–juillet 1456)," *Annales de Bourgogne* 41 (1969), pp. 5–42. See also Martens, *ibid.*, pp. 12–14.

[37] Andrew Brown, "Civic Ritual," pp. 295–96; George R. Kernodle, "Renaissance Artists in the Service of the People: Political Tableaux and Street Theatres in France, Flanders and England," *Art Bulletin* 25 (1943), p. 62.

ern city, in which the participants and observers lived and worked, miraculously became the time and place of Christ and his disciples. As they circumambulated the city, at times within the walls and at others outside, the citizens of Bruges mentally and physically retraced the steps of the *via dolorosa*. In so doing, moving through and around their own city, through their collective experience they transformed Bruges into Jerusalem. As the procession moved forward with its holy relic the people of Bruges imagined that Christ himself moved around the city with them before entering through the city gate just as he had entered Jerusalem. As the procession moved through the city, the Belfry, which remained visible for much of the time, provided participants with a visual anchor with which to mark their progress. Thomas Boogaart described the Belfry within this context as, "Providing a symbol for collective identification, while simultaneously projecting communal power to outsiders."[38] Additionally, "Following the procession's completion collective memory of the performance survived within the confines of the landscape."[39] Bruges painters and patrons clearly understood the city and the Belfry in this way and it appears in the backgrounds of over twenty paintings, where it serves as a clear signifier of the city's identity.[40]

Like the Procession of the Holy Blood, the experience of visiting the Jerusalem Chapel engages visitors both physically and emotionally: devotees move through the space while imagining and acting as if they are at the Holy Sepulcher. (fig. 4.3) The chapel's architecture and iconography served to recall the actual pilgrimage to Jerusalem undertaken by two generations of the Adornes family and the building was intended to simulate the same physical and emotional responses experienced during an actual pilgrimage.

Framed by the city of Bruges and its citizen's recognition of their city as a new Jerusalem we see more clearly how the Jerusalem Chapel

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[38] Thomas A. Boogaart, "Our Saviour's Blood: Procession and Community in Late Medieval Bruges" in *Moving Subjects: Processional Performance in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, eds. Kathleen Ashley and Wim Husken (Rodopi: Amsterdam, Atlanta, 2001), p. 90.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 94.

[40] Craig Harbison, "Fact, Symbol, Ideal: Roles for Realism in Early Netherlandish Painting," *Petrus Christus in Renaissance Bruges; an interdisciplinary approach* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1995), pp. 21–34. Harbison counts more than twenty extant paintings that include one or both of the main towers of Bruges.

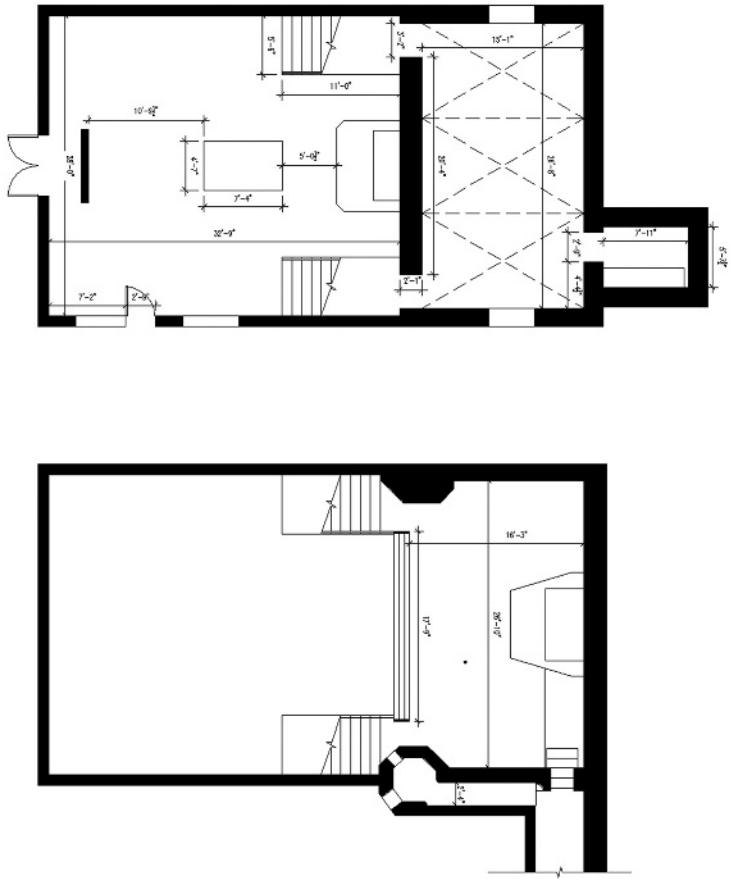

Fig. 4.3 Plan of the Jerusalem Chapel, Bruges. Plan by Anthony Pagliaroli.

was meant to function for those with access to it.[41] Built about forty years after the Chartreuse de Champmol, the Jerusalem Chapel was designed to engage visitors in a very different way than the earlier complex. Instead of an emotional charge created by dazzlingly illusionistic figures visitors to the Jerusalem Chapel were immersed in

[41] The Adornes family used the chapel and had access to it and a small private oratory via a passageway between the Chapel and their adjacent home. The Order of the Holy Sepulcher met in the Chapel and their members were buried there. An indulgence of 40 days was granted to the Chapel in 1429 for visitors and benefactors so it is possible that others were able to visit as well. Giernaert, *Archief van familie Adornes*, 2, p. 30.

a physical environment that re-created specific aspects of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem. The Jerusalem Chapel is not an attempt at an accurate reproduction of the Holy Sepulcher, instead it reproduces elements of the older building's layout and the overall effect of physically moving through key parts of it.[42] Krautheimer and others have shown that representations of Jerusalem did not always, or even usually, involve faithful copying.[43] Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulcher were both so familiar, yet so distant that selected elements were sufficiently suggestive to act as unmistakable yet circumscribed references to the Holy city.[44] Artists and patrons may even have preferred a more generalized approach since specific, realistic renderings of Jerusalem would not have given viewers the flexibility to imagine their own cities and churches functioning as believable stand-ins.

The Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges and the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem both feature discreet locations that are connected to specific moments of Christ's life. Within the vast enclosure of the church in Jerusalem these spaces are some distance from one another whereas in Bruges, because of the Chapel's more restricted scale, the visitor moves from one to another more rapidly. (fig. 4.4) Upon entering the nave, with its well-preserved stained glass windows and central tomb of the founders, the visitor's attention is immediately drawn to the sculpted mountain of Golgotha located behind the altar and immediately in front of the tomb of Anselme and Margaretha. (fig. 4.5) This large (over three meters) sculpture serves multiple functions acting simultaneously as a retable, a reliquary, and an altar. The sculpted portion includes three-dimensional representations of the elements of the *arma christi* with

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[42] The plan published with this essay includes measurements and a future publication will discuss mathematical correlations between the Jerusalem Chapel and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Pieter Adornes claimed that while visiting it he had taken exact measurements of the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. Jacques Heers, "Anselm Adornes en de Bedevaart naar het Heilig Land," in *Adornes en Jeruzalem: International Leven in het 15de- en 16de-Eeuwse Brugge*, eds. Noël Giernaert and A. Vandewalle (Bruges: Jeruzalemkerk, 1983), p. 85.

[43] Richard Krautheimer, "Introduction to an 'Iconography of Medieval Architecture,'" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942), p. 20. See also, Haim Goren, "An imaginary concept of Jerusalem in a late 16th century model," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 127 (1995), pp. 106–21; Carol Herselle Krinsky, "Representations of the Temple of Jerusalem before 1500," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 33 (1970), pp. 1–19; Genevieve Besc-Bautier, "Les imitations du Saint-Sepulchre de Jérusalem," *Revue d'histoire de la spiritualité* 50 (1974), pp. 319–342.

[44] Krautheimer, *Ibid.*, p. 50.

Fig. 4.4 Interior of the Jerusalem Chapel nave, *c.* 1430. Photo: Andrew McAllister Photography.

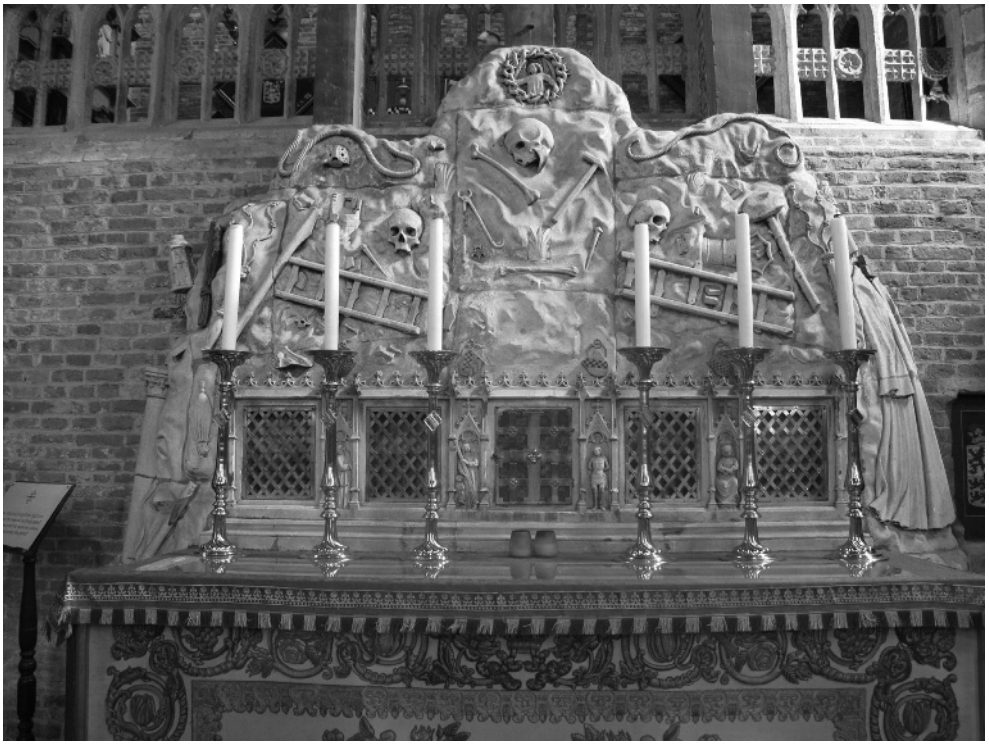

Fig. 4.5 Detail of Golgotha, Jerusalem Chapel, *c*. 1430. Photo: Andrew McAllister Photography.

several horseshoe impressions near the floor.[45] Wood is inserted into the stone to represent the dice thrown by the soldiers for Christ's clothing and a martyr's palm. A wooden lance with a metal tip is sculpted to look as if it is resting against the left hand side of the sculpture. Five small relics were once visible through metal grates inserted in a horizontal band above the altar. Beside each of the openings are small, sculpted bas-reliefs showing Christ undergoing the torments of the Passion. Traces of polychromy reveal that the Golgotha altar was

[45] Perhaps these horseshoe impressions serve as a reference to the Holy Land pilgrimage by recalling the idea of a voyage on horseback, or they may also be a reference to the Roman soldiers who are often pictured atop horses during the Crucifixion.

originally painted and with its wooden and metal inserts it was clearly intended to look as naturalistic as possible.[46]

Three large stone crosses are located atop the Golgotha altar and they extend into an upper chapel that is accessible via the staircases that rise on either side of the altar. Visitors to the chapel physically climb Golgotha as they mount fourteen steep stairs to access the elevated choir and its relic of the True Cross.[47] In ascending to this octagonal upper chapel the visitor physically reenacts a visit to the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem where visitors climb the mount of Golgotha located within the building. The light-filled choir in Bruges has wood vaulting and is capped a bulbous dome that is the most notable element of the building when seen from the street.[48]

From this upper chapel, two steps lead to a door through which only the most privileged may pass. (fig. 4.6) Here, a narrow, painted passageway accessible only to the family members leads to a tiny painted, private chapel with room for one, or perhaps two, devotees. A small glazed window, above which is painted a Crucifixion, opens to reveal a three-inch wide squint carved through the stone of the choir screen. When looking through this a privileged devotee would see, perfectly framed, the priest celebrating mass at the Golgotha altar below. The oratory includes a second glazed window through which the altar in the upper choir may be seen. This oratory allowed members of the Adornes family the opportunity to witness the mass at both altars while performing their devotions in private.[49]

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[46] The Golgotha altar dates from the early 1480s and the final phase of the Chapel's construction before Anselm's death. The polychromy is from the 19th century, but this may have been restoration of earlier painting. Jean-Pierre Esther, "Kalvarieberg," in *Adornes en Jeruzalem: International Leven in het 15de- en 16de-Eeuwse Brugge*, ed. Noël Giernaert and A. Vandewalle (Bruges: Jeruzalemkerk, 1983), p. 105.

[47] Reference is made to this relic and its location within in the Jerusalem Chapel in 1519. See Spronk, p. 109. Visitors to the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem climb eighteen stairs to the top of Golgotha. Surely the stairs in both churches must have been climbed by some visitors on their knees as is still done in Rome at the Scala Sancta, the stairs believed to have been brought from Pilate's house by Helena in 326. For the history of the Scala and their move in the Sixteenth century see Christopher L.C. Ewart Witcombe, "Sixtus V and the Scala Sancta," *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 44/4 (Dec., 1985), pp. 368–79.

[48] This dome is discussed briefly and illustrated in Wolfgang Born, "The Introduction of the Bulbous Dome into Gothic Architecture and its Subsequent Development," *Speculum* 19/2 (April, 1944), pp. 208–21. The author also discusses the significance of bulbous domes in Northern European architecture.

[49] For English medieval chantries see Roffey, *The Medieval Chantry Chapel*. For a discussion of restricted viewing of the mass see Jacqueline E. Jung, "Beyond the

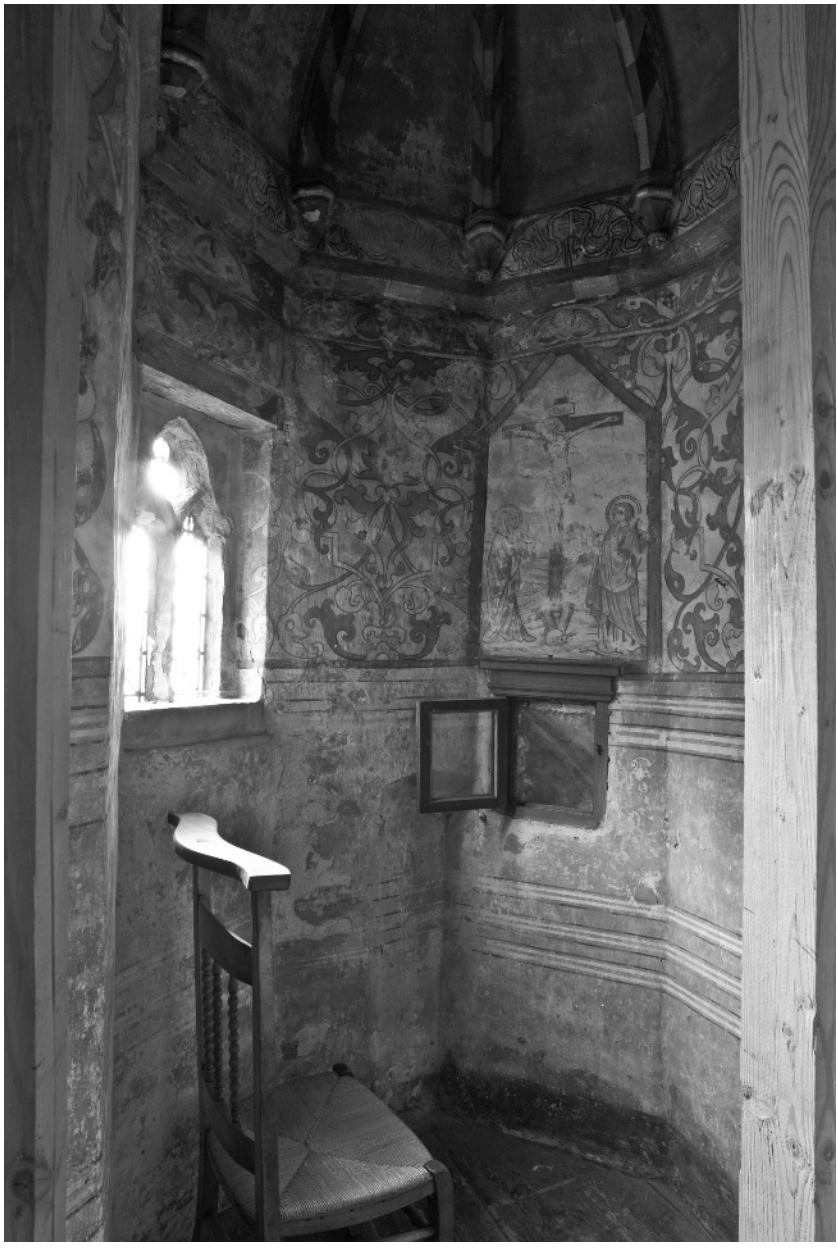

Fig. 4.6 Private Oratory, Jerusalem Chapel, Bruges. Photo: Andrew McAllister Photography.

Returning to the lower nave, low doorways to either side of the Golgotha altar and directly beneath the steps lead into a cave-like chapel vaulted with a quadripartite ceiling. This chapel is where the relic of the True Cross is currently housed and it has an altar as well as a large tomb slab over the crypt where members of the Brotherhood of Jerusalem Pilgrims may have been buried.[50] From this room a short doorway is visible. (fig. 4.7) A large, circular, piece of marble is set into the floor just in front the door, a reference to the door that leads into the holy grave in Jerusalem. Just as pilgrims to Jerusalem would bow to enter a low doorway leading into Christ's tomb, visitors in Bruges crouch or stoop deeply to enter a tiny room. Iron loops hang from the ceiling where oil lamps were once hung and a life-size polychromed, stone sculpture of Christ is placed in what appears to be an open tomb. A stone slab is placed above the sculpture and the crowned figure of Christ is visible through a metal grill. This entombment chapel is the clearest attempt by the builders to imitate the physical experience of visiting the Holy Sepulcher where one is forced to bend deeply within the Anastasis to enter the marble chamber housing Christ's tomb.[51] The hanging lamps are another reference to the entombment chapel in Jerusalem where numerous oil lamps hang overhead. Ampullae filled with oil from these lamps were a favorite souvenir for pilgrims to the Holy Land.[52] The space of the entombment chapel is so restricted in both Jerusalem and in Bruges that the one or two individuals who can fit into the space are thrust into an intimate encounter with Christ's tomb, or its simulacrum. Lit by glittering oil lamps, the shadowy space

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Barrier: The Unifying Role of the Choir Screen in Gothic Churches," *Art Bulletin* 82/4 (Dec., 2000), pp. 622–57.

[50] Spronk writes that, "apparently, the Palmers could be interred in a communal grave in the crypt of the Jerusalem Chapel, but it is unclear if such burials did indeed take place." Spronk, p. 111. For the contract between Jan Adornes and the Brotherhood, dated between 1517 and 1522 see, B. Van de Walle, "Sur les traces des pélerins flamands, hennuyers et liégeois au Monastère Sainte-Catherine du Sinaï," *Annales de la Société d'Emulation de Bruges* 101 (1964), pp. 142–47.

[51] Cynthia Hahn describes how ampullae filled with oil from the lamps that had burned over the sepulcher were then touched to a relic of the Holy cross where the oil proceeded to overflow its vessels until it was capped. Hahn likens this miraculous event to the filling up of the faithful with belief and wonderment when they visited the holy sites. Cynthia Hahn, "Seeing and Believing: The Construction of Sanctity in Early-Medieval Saints' Shrines," *Speculum* 72/4 (Oct. 1997), p. 1086.

[52] Pilgrims frequently wore oil-filled ampullae around their necks after their return from the Holy Land and some were even buried with them. It is most likely that the Adornes family acquired some of this holy oil during their travels. Hahn, *ibid*.

Fig. 4.7 Chapel of the Holy Sepulcher, polychromed sculpture of Christ. Photo: Andrew McAllister Photography.

in Bruges would have been evocative of both Jerusalem and a theatrical performance and, just as we saw at Champmol, such a dramatic presentation, with its theatrical overtones, was very much desired by the builders of the sites and those who visited them.

The Adornes family's Jerusalem Chapel was intended to foster in its visitors a heightened emotional state and to aid the performative pilgrim in earning the promised indulgences. For those who had made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem it would enable a physically engaged recollection of the journey, but it also created new memories of Jerusalem for those who were not able to visit the actual city. Thus it served as a site for performative pilgrimage for pilgrims with differing experiences. Christian pilgrims at the Church of the Holy Sepulcher stood for hours before the rock identified as Golgotha where they were instructed that the ceremony and the readings accompanying would help them experience Christ's Passion as if they had actually witnessed it. In fact, reports of cries and groans from Holy Land pilgrims figure substantially in the literature.[53] The Golgotha altar in Bruges surely served an analogous function, and the fact that it combined its narrative function with the functions of both a container for relics and an altar must have made its impact all the more powerful.

One wishes it was possible to know more about how the Adornes family and members of the Jerusalem Brotherhood actually used the Chapel in Bruges. For instance, was it visited at night? In Jerusalem during the fifteenth century Christian pilgrims were only allowed to visit the Holy Sepulcher after dark.[54] Typically they would spend three nights locked in the church with different events scheduled for each evening. This ritual, which seems to have been a result of Turkish control of the sites, was understood by the Christian faithful as a symbolic death and resurrection. Pilgrims' descriptions of these evenings make it clear that it was a highly emotional experience.[55] Because

[53] Hahn, p. 1085.

[54] Nicole Chareyron, *Pilgrims to Jerusalem in the Middle Ages*, trans. W. Donald Wilson (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000), p. 92.

[55] Chareyron, p. 93. While the Cordeliers were allowed to run the church of the Holy Sepulcher, different groups took charge during evening events inside the church. In addition to processions, prolonged meditation and prayer other events included the dubbing of members of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher and even mercantile activities since merchants were allowed in as well. A vivid description of the experience is related in Hilde F.M. Prescott, *Jerusalem Journey: Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1954), pp. 134–35.

most fifteenth-century pilgrims never saw the Holy Sepulcher illuminated by anything stronger than torch or candle light, visitors do not record strong impressions of its details of appearance. But they write with great specificity about distances between locations as well as the materials used in the building and most copies of the Holy Sepulcher, Bruges included, reflect this interest. The Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges exploits experiential rather than visual imitation.

In fact, the sheer physicality of the experience of the Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges is one of its great innovative aspects. The Adornes family and Jerusalem pilgrims who visited the chapel were able to use it as a multivalent memory device: one capable of simultaneously stimulating recollection of their remarkable voyage to the Holy Land but also a place in which the events enacted there could be physically and imaginatively re-enacted at home.[56] Additionally, the Jerusalem Chapel did not just promote recollection of past events, it also served to produce new memories, memories with the affective qualities of "actual experience" built into them. The devout visitor to the Jerusalem Chapel was able to convince him- or herself, with some justification, that the pilgrimage they had completed within the Bruges chapel's walls was in some way the equivalent of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. For one thing, visitors were able to earn indulgences as if they had undertaken an actual pilgrimage to Palestine. The performance in which visitors to the Jerusalem Chapel engaged mimicked that of pilgrims to the Holy Land and (re)created the impression (both literally and figuratively) of an actual pilgrimage experience.

One of the important things that differentiates the pilgrims' experience at Bruges from that of the pilgrim to the Chartreuse de Champmol is that those who went to Dijon had only one particularly significant place to visit, the Great Cross. Whereas, in its incorporation of movement, visitors to the Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges had an experience that was more like what would actually have experienced when visiting Jerusalem.[57] In the Church of the Holy Sepulcher there were

[56] Medieval memory has been the topic of numerous recent studies but its ascendance in the field of medieval studies is due largely to the important work of Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

[57] Jonathan Z. Smith, *To Take Place: Toward Theory in Ritual* (Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press: 1987), pp. 91–92. This stational nature was the inspiration for the Stations of the Cross which were developed in the fifteenth century and are now found in nearly every Catholic church.

three particularly significant sites visited by pilgrims. This three-part organization is intrinsic in the configuration of the spaces at Bruges. Like the monastery near Dijon, the Jerusalem Chapel was designed to create the impression that the pilgrim had entered an alternate reality where they could experience aspects of the Passion in a remarkably vivid way. The polychromed sculpture of Christ in His tomb, the wooden inserts in the Golgotha Altar and the stairs that ascend Golgotha; each of these were intended to create the impression that the fifteenth-century viewer had traveled to another time and place where encounters with holy "effigies" could and would occur. Thus, visitors to the Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges had a far more verisimilitudinous and physically engaged experience than those who visited Champmol. Interest in ever more visually engaging devotional sites resulted in financial success for the artists and masons who were best able to design and produce these simulacra. With the *sacro monte* at Varallo we reach a pinnacle of illusionistic representation and physical engagement in the service of empathic devotion.

In fact, episodic devotion and extreme verisimilitude are the greatest achievements of the first of the so-called *sacri monti* in Italy.[58] The *sacro monte* of Varallo is located on top of an alpine foothill in a small town northwest of Milan. Founded in 1486 by Bernardino Caimi (1425–1500), a Franciscan who had lived in Jerusalem and directed pilgrimage activities there, Varallo is an attempt to recreate the city of Jerusalem in Italy. Muslim control of the Holy Land meant that the city of Jerusalem became increasingly inaccessible to European Christians.[59] The voyage was dangerous and prohibitively expensive: for example, the fee charged for admission to the Church of the Holy

[58] The most thorough treatment of the *sacro monte* of Varallo is found in Roberta Panzanelli's marvelous dissertation, "Pilgrimage in Hyperreality: Images and Imagination in the early phase of the 'New Jerusalem' at Varallo (1486–1530)," PhD diss., UCLA, 1999. See also *Sacri Monti: Devozione, Arte e Cultura della Controriforma*, eds. Luciano Vaccaro and Francesca Ricardi (Milan, Jaca Books, 1992). They are also discussed and illustrated in Annabel J. Wharton, *Selling Jerusalem: Relics, Replicas, Theme Parks* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), pp. 98–126; Ryann Gregg, "The Sacro Monte of Varallo as a Physical Manifestation of the Spiritual Exercises," *Athanor* 22 (2004), pp. 49–55; (William Hood, "The Sacro Monte of Varallo: Renaissance Art and Popular Religion" in *Monasticism and the Arts*, ed. Timothy Gregory Verdon (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1984), pp. 292–308; Rudolf Wittkower, *Idea and Image: Studies in the Italian Renaissance* (Hampshire, UK: Thames and Hudson, 1978), pp. 175–83.

[59] Panzanelli, p. 11.

Sepulcher was the single most significant source of revenue for the city.[60] Thus, only the wealthiest individuals were able to undertake a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The *sacro monte* in Varallo was built to serve as a surrogate place of pilgrimage for the many devotees who were not able to visit Jerusalem.[61]

Over a dozen *sacri monti* survive today, most are in Lombardy and Piedmont and are Franciscan in origin.[62] The *sacro monte* at Varallo is the earliest of these remarkable sites and it's the only one that centers on the life of Christ and replicates pilgrimage to the Holy Land.[63] (fig. 4.8) Varallo is organized topographically and fifteenth- and sixteenth-century visitors were led by a Franciscan guide from one small chapel to the next as if moving between sacred sites in Jerusalem. The first three chapels were built during the fifteenth century and they included representations of Calvary, the Holy Sepulcher and the Ascension.[64] From 1493 to 1514 the number of chapels grew from three to 28 and Varallo now includes a total of 43 chapels.[65] The earliest visitors to the complex could enter the chapels to see the elaborate scenes inside; but viewing of the chapels later became tightly controlled and, then as now, visitors peer through grates and windows where they are presented with perfectly framed scenes.[66] The climax of this kinesthetic devotional experience was a visit to the Holy Sepulcher chapel, which apparently would be visited in the evening when it was illuminated only by candles.[67] Late medieval pilgrims to Varallo spent

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[60] Wharton, p. 119.

[61] Surrogates and the idea of them may be found throughout medieval art and life. For an analysis of this phenomenon in relation to portraits see Laura D. Gelfand and Walter S. Gibson, "Surrogate Selves: The *Rolin Madonna* and the Late-medieval Devotional Portrait," *Simiolus* (2002) 29, pp. 119–38.

[62] In addition to the site at Varallo, Sacri Monte are located in Orta, Crea, Santa Trinitá di Ghiffa, Belmonte, Domodossola, Montrigone, Graglia, Andorno, Monta d'Alba, Monte Berico di Vicenza, Torricella Verzate, Cerveno, and Sasso di Locarno. Wharton, p. 126.

[63] Wittkower, p. 183, believed that Varallo differed from these other sites primarily in terms of their inspiration. Rather than attempting to replicate Jerusalem these later hilltop constructions were Counter-Reformatory in nature. They exploit the religious fervor inspired by Varallo to achieve the goal of bringing the faithful closer to the Church.

[64] It is significant that these were the first three sites chosen for commemoration and reproduction, Calvary and the Holy Sepulcher are also commemorated in the Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges.

[65] Hood, p. 293.

[66] Wittkower, p. 177.

[67] Hood, p. 303.

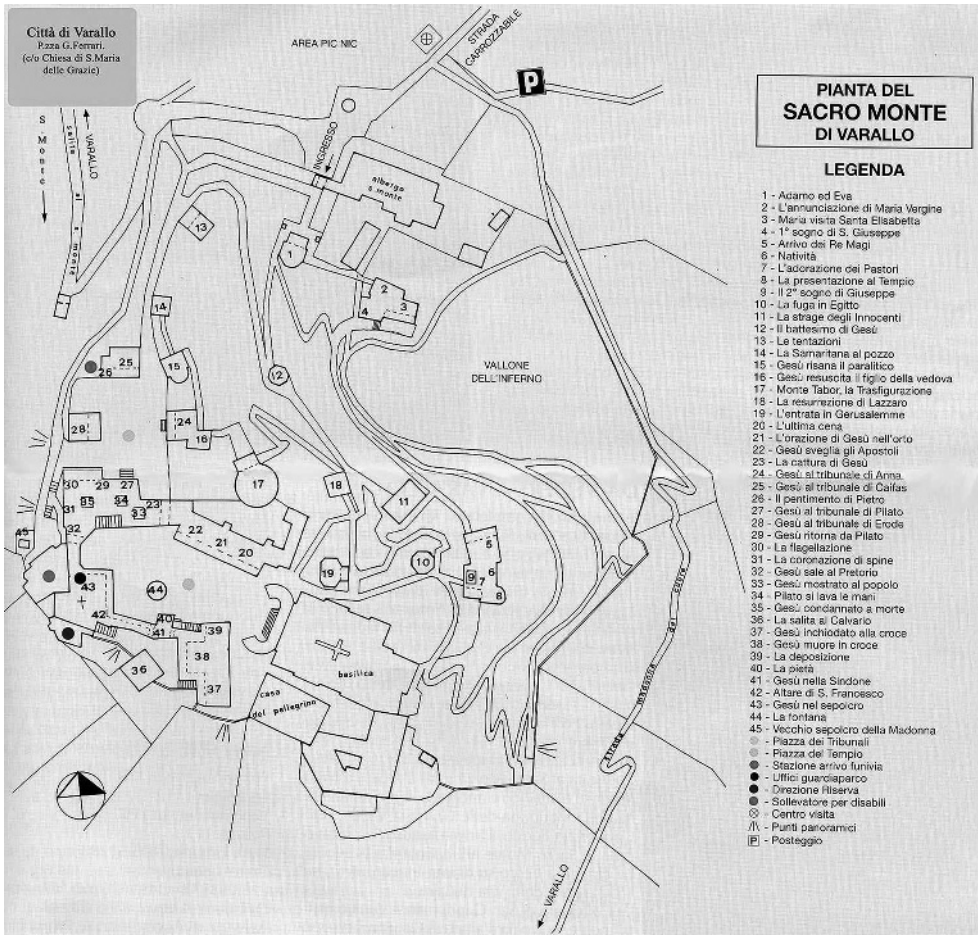
Città di Varallo
P.zza G.Ferrari,
(c/o Chiesa di S.Maria
delle Grazie)
AREA PIC NIC
STRADA CARROZZABILE
INGRESSO
albergo
il monte
VALLONE
DELL'INFERNO
basilica
casa del pellegrino
VARALLO
PIANTA DEL
SACRO MONTE
DI VARALLO
LEGENDA
1 - Adamo ed Eva
2 - L'annunciazione di Maria Vergine
3 - Maria visita Santa Elisabetta
4 - 1° sogno di S. Giuseppe
5 - Arrivo dei Re Magi
6 - Natività
7 - L'adorazione dei Pastori
8 - La presentazione al Tempio
9 - Il 2° sogno di Giuseppe
10 - La fuga in Egitto
11 - La strage degli Innocenti
12 - Il battesimo di Gesù
13 - Le tentazioni
14 - La Samaritana al pozzo
15 - Gesù risana il paralitico
16 - Gesù resuscita il figlio della vedova
17 - Monte Tabor, la Trasfigurazione
18 - La resurrezione di Lazzaro
19 - L'entrata in Gerusalemme
20 - L'ultima cena
21 - L'orazione di Gesù nell'orto
22 - Gesù sveglia gli Apostoli
23 - La cattura di Gesù
24 - Gesù al tribunale di Anna
25 - Gesù al tribunale di Caifas
26 - Il pentimento di Pietro
27 - Gesù al tribunale di Pilato
28 - Gesù al tribunale di Erode
29 - Gesù ritorna da Pilato
30 - La flagellazione
31 - La coronazione di spine
32 - Gesù sale al Pretorio
33 - Gesù mostrato al popolo
34 - Pilato si lava le mani
35 - Gesù condannato a morte
36 - La salita al Calvario
37 - Gesù inchiodato alla croce
38 - Gesù muore in croce
39 - La deposizione
40 - La pietà
41 - Gesù nella Sindone
42 - Altare di S. Francesco
43 - Gesù nel sepolcro
44 - La fontana
45 - Vecchio sepolcro della Madonna
- Piazza dei Tribunali
- Piazza del Tempio
- Stazione arrivo funivia
- Uffici guardiaparco
- Direzione Riserva
- Sollevatore per disabili
- Centro visita
- Punti panoramici
- Posteggio

Fig. 4.8 Plan of Varallo. Photo: public domain image.

the daylight hours in contemplation of holy texts so that the impact of their nocturnal visit would be heightened by their anticipation. At the Holy Sepulcher Chapel in Varallo, as at Bruges, the pilgrim would stoop deeply to enter a small room housing a sculpture of Christ in his tomb. This figure could be touched, presumably through a grate as in Bruges, and pilgrims were expected to weep in response, as if witnessing Christ himself in his tomb.[68]

[68] Hood, p. 301. Today the figure of Christ is behind glass and can no longer be touched.

Varallo's other chapels feature elaborate scenes of Christ's life represented by vividly three-dimensional figures set against illusionistically frescoed walls. While the figure of Jeremiah from the Great Cross at Champmol sported real copper spectacles and the polychromed figure of Christ in Bruges was placed beneath a marble slab and illuminated by oil lamps, the figures at Varallo surpass all of them with horsehair wigs, glass eyes and cloth draperies; a porcupine in one of the scenes even has real quills![69] Actual ropes hang from the ceiling and real bricks and shrubs are used to make the landscape elements as "real" as possible. The sculptured figures, together with their backgrounds, are painted in vivid colors and they act their parts with melodramatic flair. With its dynamic theatricality and the centrality of the spectator's empathic response Varallo seems not to look back to the Middle Ages as much as it opens a window onto the art of the Seventeenth Century.

At Varallo all of the pilgrim's senses are engaged as they physically move through the imitative topography of the carefully rendered and entirely fictional Jerusalem. An emphasis is placed on topographical accuracy in part because Caimi was personally familiar with the layout of Jerusalem and he wanted to create a topomimetic approximation.[70] Thus the pilgrims' experience at Varallo was closer to the actual experience of visiting Jerusalem and to the Biblical description of the holy city than to the Stations of the Cross or any other similarly structured, fifteenth-century performative experience. Caimi's *Lent Book on the Articles of Faith* connects Biblical stories with specific sites to create a "theatre of the imagination."[71] Colin Morris equates this experience with that described by Ludovico Barbo who advised his readers to "imagine that you are present and pretend to see."[72] Two early guidebooks to Varallo survive and they act as a *vade mecum* with

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[69] Wittkower, p. 177.

[70] Panzanelli uses the term topomimetic to refer to an imitation of the topography of a specific place, p. 64.

[71] Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ*, p. 361. Caimi's book is the *Quadragesimale de Articulis Fedei*.

[72] Additional material on this may be found in Guido Gentile, "Evocazione topographica, composizione di luogo e tipologia dei Sacri Monti" in *Sacri Monti: Devozione, Arte e Cultura della Controriforma*, eds. Luciano Vaccaro and Francesca Ricardi (Milan: Jaca Book, 1992), pp. 89–100. *The Meditations on the Life of Christ* by Thomas Kempis is roughly contemporary and he provides a similar set of devotional instructions. *Meditations on the Life of Christ* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1978).

instructions, directions, prayers and the promise of salvation at their conclusions.[73]

But Varallo is different from the sites discussed above because it functioned more like a theme park where ecclesiastical guides led visitors from chapel to chapel while explaining the story of Christ's life and death.[74] The desire for a simulated experience of the Holy Land that inspired the establishment of Varallo is like that which prompted the imagery found at the Chartreuse de Champmol and the Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges: in all three sites visitors were encouraged to imagine themselves as participants in sacred events.[75] The *sacro monte* of Varallo is a continuation and expansion of the experiential and illusionistic ideas explored at the earlier foundations. But the visitor's experience at Varallo was amplified, codified, and controlled so that inventive and personal imagination played a less significant role. Because of the highly illusionistic nature of the imagery at Varallo visitors witnessed the biblical events and experienced them as they were represented and presented to them. The ability of Renaissance artists to create illusionistic imagery enabled church officials to establish greater iconographic homogeneity and to exert more control over individual perceptions of holy events.

In its earliest incarnation, when it was still possible to enter the chapels at Varallo and walk through them, visitors may well have felt as if they were participants in Christ's life as they moved through groupings of life-sized figures and illusionistic scenery.[76] The first visitors to Varallo performed as actors in dramatic, vividly-colored, three-dimensional tableaux of biblical scenes. However, in the sixteenth-century interaction with the holy figures was terminated with the imposition of bars, grates and other devices to control the viewer and what they viewed. Visitors to Varallo were no longer participants but were instead relegated to the role of spectators. Medieval devotees' eagerness for visual prompts that aided in imaging events from Christ's life spurred artists to create ever more naturalistic illusions, but in a sort

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[73] Hood, pp. 301–302.

[74] Colin Morris, *The Sepulchre of Christ and the Medieval West: From the beginning to 1600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 359.

[75] Morris, p. 361, quotes Ludovico Barbo who encouraged the devout to "imagine that you are present and pretend to see."

[76] Panzanelli rightly connects the first, more intimate and interactive design of these chapels to the architectural spaces in which memories were meant to be stored, recalled and engaged according to medieval treatises on memory, pp. 127–28.

of Catch-22, this newly illusionistic imagery actually demanded less imaginative engagement from its viewers.

Varallo is a product of the same devotional desires that resulted in the creation and establishment of the Stations of the Cross, a participatory phenomenon that swept across Europe starting early in the Sixteenth Century.[77] In Jerusalem the holy places that were visited by pilgrims were not necessarily in the order of those of the Stations of the Cross, nor were they visited in the chronological order in which the events of the Passion were said to have occurred. Various sites and buildings in Jerusalem were in the process of being shaped in order to function as Stations of the Cross, but fifteenth- and sixteenth-century pilgrims were often confused by the experience of walking the actual streets of Jerusalem.

Like the re-creations we've seen at Champmol and Bruges, the aim of the illusionistic imagery at Varallo was not to try to replicate the actual Holy Land, rather the overall goal was to create a location that resembled the original and then populate it with images that enabled pilgrims to feel as if they were actually present at the event depicted. Verisimilitude is a key element in such an endeavor, but truth to nature or reality is not. What Varallo represents is the fulfillment, and perhaps even overachievement of the goals first explored at the Chartreuse de Champmol and Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges. Pilgrims at Varallo didn't just imagine the biblical scenes depicted, rather, thanks to the illusionistic skill of the artists working there, the first visitors were able to physically and emotionally immerse themselves as participants in Christ's life. The highly naturalistic rendering of the narrative of Christ's life served to validate the viewer's own experience. And this validation helped buttress the belief that pilgrimage to sites like Varallo was a worthy substitute for pilgrimage to the Holy Land or one of the other major pilgrimage sites. Verisimilitude also reinforced why and how such places were indulgenced. The wish to become a participant either through prayer, memory, imagination or the contemplation of images is made manifest in countless devotional treatises and images, but at Varallo we find it reaching an acme of sorts. The push toward naturalism and illusionism that originated in the late medieval desire for emotionally engaged experiences resulted, at the turn of the

[77] Herbert Thurston, *The Stations of the Cross: an account of their history and devotional purpose* (London, Burns and Oates, 1914), p. 89.

Sixteenth Century, in imagery that empowered ecclesiastical authorities who institutionalized the devotional experiences at Varallo and elsewhere.

Yet, the desire to walk in Christ's footsteps, even when a visit to the Holy Land is not possible, continues to the present day. The *Holy Land Experience* in Orlando, Florida features copies of biblical landmarks and visitors arrive anxious for a profoundly emotional experience. Owned and operated by the Trinity Broadcast Network, the theme park recreates Jerusalem and features actors who play out the scenes of Christ's life, Passion, and Resurrection at regularly scheduled intervals throughout the day. *The Holy Land Experience's* website includes video footage that highlights the naturalism and emotional power of these performances. Jerusalem itself is recreated in the park along with Christ's place of burial. Testimonials on the website describe how the park can improve visitors' understanding of biblical events, and there is a repeated emphasis on the emotional power of the dramatic recreations. The park's biblical scriptorium includes "relics" to instruct visitors on the history of the Bible and a robotic John Wycliffe. The site promises that visitors will feel the "love and presence of God."[78] The *Holy Land Experience* is a twenty-first century variation on the emotional themes explored and exploited at the Chartreuse de Champmol, the Jerusalem Chapel in Bruges and at the *sacro monte* of Varallo. All are the end result of the wish to be present at and to witness key events in Christ's life. Satisfied pilgrims to Orlando, like Wendi from Canton, whose testimonial is quoted at the beginning of this chapter, visit the park in order to experience the same emotions felt by Margery Kempe hundreds of years before her. The timeless desire for this emotional connection, and the visually engaging environments and objects created to satisfy it, function as a key enabling us to better understand the history of devotional art and, in particular, the illusionism that began its development in the Fifteenth Century but continued through the Baroque period and up to the present day.

[78] The website is http://www.holylandexperience.com.

5. CONSORTING WITH STONE: THE FIGURE OF THE SPEAKING AND MOVING STATUE IN EARLY MODERN ITALIAN WRITING

Lex Hermans

If we are to believe Leon Battista Alberti and Andrea Palladio the cities of Renaissance Italy accommodated two populations: one composed of the people actually living there and the other of bronze and marble statues placed everywhere suitable. This second population interacted with the first, as according to many they were capable of gesturing and even of speaking. The following reflections originate in a story by Anton Francesco Doni, who described Donatello's statue of St. George on the façade of Orsanmichele in Florence as an image that could and did willingly talk with its visitors. Taking this story seriously, instead of viewing it as pure fiction or a mere *topos*, it becomes necessary to look for reasons why Renaissance Italians were not particularly surprised with the living aspects of their statues. The rhetorical background of educated people at the time reveals a clue. Rhetoric acquainted them with the idea that in the end only emotions will bring about persuasion, and that a viewer is only moved by actions that happen before his eyes. Hence the importance of evocative speech and writing, which made things spoken or written visible for the audience's mind's eye. Hence also the importance of the *imago agens*, the affective or moving image, in the visual arts. For public art was viewed as far more than a pasture for the eyes: it was also—perhaps even foremost—a tool for influencing the minds of the spectators. As period wisdom dictated that people are especially moved by their own kind, Renaissance society was receptive to lively and lifelike representations of the human form. Artists were expected to make, and indeed made, statues that deceivingly looked like real persons. Many Renaissance people reacted to them as if they were just that.[1]

[1] I want to thank NWO (the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research), which by a generous grant made research for this article possible. N.B. References to ancient authors are made according to standard practice, e.g. Cicero, *De oratore* 1.3.12; unless otherwise indicated, the translations of quotes from the ancients are

The speaking image as a vehicle for criticism

Anton Francesco Doni (1513–1574) was a *poligrafo*, one of those sixteenth-century independent authors who made a living out of their writing. He was a critic of his times, in particular of the social and political evils of his native Florence, and abhorred the selfishness of the upper classes. In his writings, he voiced the worries and sympathies of the working classes, and his tone sounds remarkably authentic.[2] The third part of his volume of literary fantasies *The Marbles* (1552) opens with a narrative about the virtue of modesty. It bears the subtitle "Chance, or Fortune, or Fate often makes someone to occupy a place (by putting him up in front) that he doesn't deserve; and very often one who is worthy of honor remains aside and behind."[3] The story is told within the frame of a larger tale. It starts with the conversation between a Florentine and a "foreign academic" who wants to visit the most important sites of the city. His guide first takes him to Donatello's *St. George* (fig. 5.1) at Orsanmichele, originally the grain exchange building which, following a miraculous apparition of the Virgin, was converted into a church.[4] The foreigner exclaims in admiration: "Oh, how beautiful! oh, what a beautiful figure! oh, it's wonderful; it's one of the most beautiful things I've ever seen!" His enthusiastic response provokes the following exchange: "It once did speak, this statue." The visitor is surprised: "What? Speak?" He suspects his host is pulling his leg, but the Florentine is quite serious and shows himself prepared

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those of the Loeb Classical Library, referred to by the name of the translator(s) and the year the volume first was published (in the Cicero example: E.W. Sutton and H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library 1942).

[2] See Paul F. Grendler, *Critics of the Italian world (1530–1560): Anton Francesco Doni, Nicolò Franco and Ortensio Lando* (Madison / Milwaukee / London: University of Wisconsin Press 1969), especially pp. 49–65.

[3] Anton Francesco Doni, *I marmi*, ed. Pietro Fanfani, with a life of the author by Salvatore Bongi. 2 vols. (Florence: Barbèra 1863), vol. 2, p. 7: "La Ventura, o la Fortuna, o la Sorte fa occupare il luogo talvolta a tale (mettendolo inanzi) che non lo merita; e chi è degno d'onore bene spesso si rimane da parte e adietro."

[4] Apart from Doni, see also Anton Francesco Grazzini, called Il Lasca, 'Capitolo in lode della statua di san Giorgio di mano di Donatello a Orsanmichele in Firenze,' in *idem*, *Le rime burlesche edite e inedite*, ed. Carlo Verzone (Florence: Sansoni 1882), pp. 526–29, and Francesco Bocchi, *Eccellenza del San Giorgio di Donatello, scultore fiorentino, posta nella facciata di fuori d'Or San Michele*, in Paola Barocchi, ed., *Trattati d'arte del Cinquecento tra Manierismo e Controriforma*, 3 vols. (Bari: Laterza 1960–1962), vol. 3, pp. 125–94.

Fig. 5.1 Donatello, *St. George*, *c.* 1415–17; originally at Orsanmichele, now in the Bargello Museum, Florence. Photo: Centrum voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, Radboud University, Nijmegen.

to ask the statue itself to recount why it did speak—and the statue willingly obliges. It tells about a stonemason who until his death had visited the *St. George* twice a day and engaged him in "the most beautiful conversations one might hear." One day the mason was very upset. Earlier he had learned that Baccio Bandinelli's marble group *Hercules and Cacus* (1534) was installed on the *ringhiera*, the platform in front of the Palazzo della Signoria, which at the time of the story served as living quarters and offices to duke Cosimo I de' Medici, thus sharing a place of honor with Michelangelo's *David*. (fig. 5.2) The stonemason was outraged "to see you put aside in this place, and that one at the principal and most beautiful site of all," for he thought Bandinelli's creation far inferior to the *St. George*. The *David's* prime position he could appreciate if he had to because at least it was made after the manner of Donatello, but this *Hercules*…

Now Doni comes to the moral of the matter. In order to cheer up the stonemason, he makes *St. George* say to him: "To me it's enough to deserve that place more than him, although fortune and fate have taken that one there, and I by good chance have occupied my own site. Never fret, for I don't think it is worse to deserve a chair when there isn't any around than to be put on one and not to deserve it—on the contrary!" With this statement the statue concludes its story and the text reverts to its visitors. The foreigner says: "It is a unique case that you Florentines make your marbles speak. Anything else? For very few persons will believe it." The Florentine answers: "Everybody believes after his own fashion. But, apart from the speaking, which is an amazing thing, it even teaches us something very useful. For you see how a piece of marble has taught us that we don't have to despair every time we see a man jump to a station too elevated for him." In the peroration the foreign visitor once more pushes home the point: "Now, enough of this; let's go to the square to see these colossuses [i.e. the *David* and *Hercules and Cacus*]. And let's confirm that it is true what your marble said when speaking of someone who was put up in a place he doesn't deserve, and of another one who was humbled while he deserved to be exalted; and that in the end it is better to be worthy of sitting at the head of the table and keep to its lower end, than unworthy of the head and yet occupy it. Therefore our old sages said that the man honours the place, not the place the man."[5]

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[5] The whole narrative: Doni, *Marmi*, vol. 2, pp. 7–12; quotes, resp. p. 7: "*Peregrino*. O bello! o che bella figura! oh l'è mirabile! ell'è delle belle cose che io vedessi mai!"

Fig. 5.2 The *ringhiera* at the Palazzo Vecchio, Florence, with on left Michelangelo's *David*, 1501–04 and on right Baccio Bandinelli's *Hercules and Cacus*, 1525–34. Photo: Centrum voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, Radboud University, Nijmegen.

Fiorentino. "La favellò una volta questa statua." *Peregrino*. "Come! parlò?"; p. 8: "i più bei ragionamenti che si potessino udire"; p. 9: "il veder te in questo luogo da parte, e quello nel principale et universale bellissimo sito"; pp. 9–10: "*Peregrino*. Quest'è un caso non più udito, che voi altri Fiorentini facciate parlare i marmi; volete voi altro? che poche persone lo vorranno credere. *Fiorentino*. Ciascuno creda a modo suo. Ma, oltre al favellare, che è cosa stupenda, egli s'impara ancora qualcosa utile per noi. Vedete che un pezzo di marmo ci ha fatto conoscere, come talvolta noi non ci dobbiamo disperare, se noi vediamo salire un uomo in qualche grado più degno di lui."; pp. 11–12: "Or non più di questo: andiamo in piazza a veder quei colossi, affermando esser vero quel che ha detto il vostro Marmo, parlando di chi è posto in luogo che non merita, et abbassato tale che meriterebbe d'essere esaltato; e che egli è meglio ultimamente esser degno di stare in capo di tavola e tenere il luogo da piedi, che indegno di quella testa e possederla; perchè i nostri savj antichi dissero, che l'uomo onora il luogo, e non il luogo l'uomo." For the last remark, cf. Cicero, *De officiis* 1.39.139.

Apart from imparting a lesson in morality, with this story Doni expressed his views on the 'contest' between the modern statues put up on the square in front of the Palazzo Vecchio. Through the main characters of his fiction he could pass judgement on the artistic value of the artists' individual styles. Obviously, Doni disliked Bandinelli's rather stiff academic manner, for which Pope Leo X (1475–1521) had enthused and which accorded well with the image of reticent power Cosimo I (1519–1574) wanted to express in the first years of his reign. Doni's verdict on Bandinelli's *maniera* was an implicit and prudent way to vent political criticism.[6] In a way, Doni used the statues in a manner very similar to the Romans of his time who glued anonymous little notes to the base of the mutilated ancient torso called *Pasquino*, or the Venetians who did the same with the *Gobbo* at the foot of the old Rialto Bridge. Usually the notes gave vent to political and social criticism, and by gluing them to the bases, their authors made the statues 'speak.' Doni's colleague *poligrafo* Pietro Aretino made the *pasquinate* into an independent literary form that combined whit and criticism, and made the figure of the speaking image if anything wider known.[7]

Talking with statues in everyday life

Doni's *The Marbles* is literary fiction, but like many fantasies in the end it is based on real observations: many of his readers would have been willing to follow the author's imagination. A speaking statue

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[6] For *Hercules and Cacus*, see John Pope-Hennessy, *An Introduction to Italian Sculpture*, 4th ed., 3 vols. (London: Phaidon Press 1996), vol. 3, pp. 130–33; cf. Detlev Heikamp, "Zum Herkules und Kakus von Baccio Bandinelli," in Raffaele Torella, ed., *Le parole e i marmi: Studi in onore di Raniero Gnoli nel suo 70º compleanno*, 2 vols. (Rome: Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente; Serie orientale Roma XCII, 1–2 2001), vol. 2, pp. 983–1006.

[7] For the *pasquinate* in general, see Mario dell'Arco, *Pasquino: Statua parlante* (Rome: Bulzoni 1967); Valerio Marucci, ed., *Pasquinate del Cinque e Seicento* (Rome: Salerno 1988); and Chrysa Damianaki, Paolo Procaccioli, and Angelo Romano, eds., *Ex marmore: Pasquini, pasquinisti, pasquinate nell'Europa moderna. Atti del Colloquio internazionale Lecce-Otranto, 17–19 novembre 2005* (Rome: Vecchiarelli 2006); in the last volume also various references to Aretino's *pasquinate*. For Venice, see Marin Sanudo, *I diarii, MCCCCXCVI–MDXXXIII*, ed. Rinaldo Fulin *et al.*, 58 vols. (Venice: Visentini 1879–1902), vol. 57, col. 288: "In questa terra è stà principiato a far cose che non laudo et è che volendo imitar quello che si fa a Roma a Pasquino, in Rialto sopra colone vien la note posti varij sonetti e capitoli."

was pure fiction, but one, nonetheless, of a familiar kind. People were accustomed to ascribe live qualities to cult images in churches, as various medieval authors bear out.[8] Nor was the perception of this living presence restricted to the images of saints. Master Gregory, a twelfth-century author of a guide to Rome, there saw a golden statue of an emperor that appeared to move and to speak.[9] We may assume that this habit of ascribing movement and speech to statues was as common to sixteenth-century people as to Master Gregory. Michelangelo, for instance, was susceptible to the idea, for in 1524, when he was nearly fifty years old, he wrote in the margin of a drawing of the statues that would adorn the tomb of Giuliano de' Medici, duke of Nemours:

> The Day and the Night are talking and say: 'By our quick run we have conducted duke Giuliano to death; he rightly takes revenge as he does. And the revenge is this: as we have killed him, he, though dead, has taken away the light from us and with his closed eyes has also shut ours, so that they no longer will shine about the earth. What might he have done to us while he lived!'[10]

Without the faintest trace of irony—humor wasn't one of Michelangelo's strengths—the sculptor attributes to his allegorical statues ideas of their own that could be contrasted to the dead duke's exploits and spirit. It wasn't, however, the only time Michelangelo made *Night* speak. (fig. 5.3) More than twenty years later, when he was an elderly man and Cosimo's rulership of Florence had become absolutist, Giovanni Strozzi praised the statue in a quatrain:

> The Night you see in so sweet a manner
> sleeping, is sculpted by an Angel
> out of this stone, and because she is sleeping, she does live;
> wake her up if you don't believe it, and she will talk to you.

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[8] See Ellert Dahl, "Heavenly images: The statue of St. Foy of Conques and the signification of the Medieval 'cult-image' in the West," *Acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia* 8 (1978), pp. 175–91.

[9] Dahl, "Heavenly images," p. 188.

[10] Michelangelo *in margine* on a drawing now in the Casa Buonarroti, Florence, as quoted in Antonio Forcellino, *Michelangelo Buonarroti: Storia di una passione eretica* (Bari: Laterza 2005), p. 246: "El di e la Nocte parlano e dichono: Noi abiano chol nostro veloce corso condocto alla morte el ducha Giuliano; è ben g[i]usto, che e'ne facci vendecta chome fa. E la vendechta è questa: Che avendo noi morto lui, lui chosi morto a tolta la luce a noi e chogli ochi chiusi a serrato e nostri, che non risplendon piu sopra la terra. Che arebbe di noi dunche facto, mentre vivea!"

Fig. 5.3 Michelangelo, the statue of *Night* on the *Tomb of Giuliano de' Medici*, 1524–29, in the New Sacristy at San Lorenzo, Florence. Photo: Centrum voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, Radboud University, Nijmegen.

The aged artist's answer took the form of a gentle rebuke by the statue itself:

> Dear to me is sleep, dearer still being made of stone,
> while harm and shame last;
> not to see, not to hear, to me is a great boon;
> so do not waken me, ah, speak but softly.[11]

Whereas Italian society was open to the fiction of speaking statues, very likely spectators were wont to address statues and even to imagine they got an audible and understandable answer. Doni's stonemason used Donatello's *St. George* as a confidant and indeed as a real interlocutor in conversations that *de facto* took place in his mind. But statues, Doni suggested in another story, were used to speak and also to listen to human laments. In the silence following the words of Michelangelo's *Dawn* in San Lorenzo's New Sacristy, who explained that the famous *pentimento*, the change of position of her left arm, was her own doing,[12] the foreign visitor comments on the city's art scene. The Florentines, he says, had treated their great artists very unfairly, so no wonder they had all left. And it wasn't the government to blame, the visitor is cautious to observe, but the narrow-mindedness of people that wouldn't allow a genius to stand out. The Florentine host pays attention to his guest's every word: "I have listened to you as if I were a marble statue."[13]

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[11] Strozzi as quoted in Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Rime*, ed. Ettore Barelli, 4th impr. (Milan: Biblioteca Universale Rizzoli 1990), p. 281: "La Notte che tu vedi in sì dolci atti / dormir, fu da un Angelo scolpita / in questo sasso e, perché dorme, ha vita: / destala, se nol credi, e parleratti." Michelangelo, *ibid.*, p. 281, no. 247: "Caro m'è 'l sonno, e più l'esser di sasso, / mentre che 'l danno e la vergogna dura; / non veder, non sentir m'è gran ventura; però non mi destar, deh, parla basso." Translation in Michelangelo Buonarroti, *The Poems*, ed. & transl. by Christopher Ryan (London: J.M. Dent 1996), p. 201. Barelli, *ibid.* takes "danno e vergogna" to bear on the despotism of Cosimi I; Forcellino, *Michelangelo*, pp. 250–51 sees the quatrain in relation to Michelangelo's position after 1530, when the Medici, ousted by a shortlived republican intermezzo (1527–1530), with the help of the Emperor Charles V (1500–1558) returned to Florence and the artist, who had wholeheartedly supported the republican government, was forced by Pope Clement VII (1478–1534) to continue his work at the Medici-chapel, whereas his republican comrades fell victim to retaliation.

[12] Doni, *Marmi*, vol. 2, pp. 21–26 ("Academico Peregrino e Fiorentino, e l'Aurora di Michel'Agnolo Buonaruoti"); cf. John Shearman, *Only connect…: Art and the spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (Washington, DC: The National Gallery of Art 1992), pp. 47–48.

[13] Doni, *Marmi*, vol. 2, pp. 24–25: "Io sono stato ascoltarvi come s'io fossi stato una statua di marmo."

From yet another story in *The Marbles* we can deduce that it was particularly the naturalistically represented human figure that was addressed by spectators and in its turn answered them. In the *Story of the Marble Lion* the "foreign academic" tells his counterpart about the statue of a lion in the collection of Gabriel Vendramin (1484–1552) in Venice. The Florentine host, who had accompanied the visitor to Donatello's *St. George* and Michelangelo's *Dawn*, concludes their conversations with the remark: "but when I occasion statues to talk, I let speak figures that are talking by rights, not animals that haven't received from heaven the gift of speech."[14] Only humans are able to talk and are supposed to do so, according to this reasoning. But presumably to Renaissance perception statues representing real people were so lifelike that they also were granted the right to talk. It is impossible to establish to what extent the fiction of speaking images was a part of everyday life, but we know for humanists like Machiavelli and Erasmus reading the ancient authors was tantamount to conversing with them. Machiavelli even went as far as to change for reading in the evening in order to meet his "interlocutors" with dignity.[15] Keeping this in mind

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[14] Doni, *Marmi*, vol. 2, p. 42: "ma il far io favellare statue, fo parlar figure che per il dovere favellano, e non animali che non hanno la dote dal cielo della loquela." The complete *favola*: *ibid*., pp. 40–42.

[15] In 1523 Erasmus wrote to Johann von Vlatten about reading Cicero: "Qui fieri potest vt tot res eruditas tam dilucide, tam copiose, tanto cum affectu explicet, nisi penitus intelligat quod scribit? Quis autem sumpsit huiusmodi libros in manum quin surrexerit animo sedatiore? Quis tam accessit moerens qui non abieret hilarior? Geri videtur quod legis, nec secus affilat animum tuum quidam orationis *enthousiasmos*, quam si ex viuo ipsius pectore ac felicissimo illo ore manantem audires. […] Quid enim felicius quam cum eloquentissimis simul ac sanctissimis viris, quoties lubitum est, confabulari? neque minus habere perspectum illorum, qui ante tot annos vixerunt, ingenium, mores, cogitationes, studia, facta quam si multis annis egisses cum illis consuetudinem?" Desiderius Erasmus, *Opus epistolarum*, ed. P.S. Allen *e.a.*, 12 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1906–58), vol. 5, p. 340. Not only Erasmus did envisage what Cicero wrote as living reality, he even kept company with him and his kind as if they were living friends, having with him a daily conversation. Likewise Machiavelli, who on 10 December 1513 wrote to his friend Francesco Vettori: "Venuta la sera, mi ritorno in casa, et entro nel mio scrittoio; et in su l'uscio mi spoglio quella veste quotidiana, piena di fango et di loto, et mi metto panni reali et curiali; et rivestito condecentemente entro nelle antique corti degli antiqui huomini, dove, da loro ricevuto amorevolmente, mi pasco di quel cibo, che solum è mio, et che io nacqui per lui; dove io non mi vergogno parlare con loro, et domandarli della ragione delle loro actioni; et quelli per loro humanità rispondono; et non sento per 4 hore di tempo alcuna noia, sdimenticho ogni affanno, non temo la povertà, non mi sbigottiscie la morte: tucto mi transferisco in loro. E perché Dante dice che non fa scienza sanza lo ritenere lo havere inteso, io ho notato quello di che per la loro conversatione ho fatto capitale, et composto uno opuscolo *De principatibus*." Niccolò Machiavelli, *Lettere a Francesco Vettori e a Francesco Guicciardini (1513–1527)*, ed. Giorgio Inglese, 2d ed.

it is not difficult to imagine that people easily went about with lifelike statues and to accept that they actually perceived statues as talking to them much in the same way as they talked to statues.

Lifelike statues and expressive gestures

Statues were a part of daily life. Authors such as Leon Battista Alberti (1404–1472), Pirro Ligorio (*c*. 1510–1583), and Andrea Palladio (1508–1580) mention the many statues in Antiquity that formed the second population of Rome.[16] A similar fashion prevailed in the Renaissance. During the sixteenth century sculpted figures of a striking realism, frequently shown in rhetorical postures, became a common phenomenon in Italy. Apart from these lifelike statues city dwellers occasionally saw 'living' statues. In Venice, for instance, actors disguised as statues of the Olympian gods recited poems at the welcoming ceremonies for foreign princes—and probably at other official events in the Republic of St. Mark as well.[17] It's difficult to imagine this form of homage as

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(Milan: Rizzoli 1996), pp. 194–95. As early as the mid-fifteenth century the merchant and learned traveler Ciriaco d'Ancona called his project to record Ancient buildings and inscriptions in Greece and the Near East a "conversation with the dead." See Anthony Grafton, *Bring Out Your Dead: The Past as Revelation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2001), p. 37.

[16] Leon Battista Alberti, *De re aedificatoria* 7.16, ed. Giovanni Orlandi & Paolo Portoghesi, 2 vols. (Milan: Il Polifilo 1966), vol. 2, p. 655: "Romae tantam affuisse copiam statuarum ferunt, ut alter adesse populus lapideus diceretur." Pirro Ligorio, *Antichità di Roma* 34.*proem*. in Erna Mandowsky & Charles Mitchell, eds., *Pirro Ligorio's Roman Antiquities: The Drawings in Ms XIII.B.7 in the National Library in Naples* (London: Warburg Institute / University of London 1963), p. 49 n. 5: "[Plinio] dice che in Roma a suoi tempi eran' due populi, l'un d'huomini vivi, et l'altro di statue di marmo". Andrea Palladio, *I quattro libri dell'architettura* 4.8, ed. Licisco Magagnato & Paola Marini (Milan: Il Polifilo 1980), p. 277: "né si meraviglierà alcuno che io ponga tanta copia di statue in questi edifici, perché si legge che tan ne erano in Roma, che parevano un altro popolo." The source of this remark on the "second population" is probably from Cassiodorus, *Variarum libri XII* 7.13.1: "Nam quidam populus copiosissimus statuarum, greges etiam abundantissimi equorum, tali sunt cautela seruandi, quali et cura uidentur affixi, ubi, si esset humanis rebus ulla consideratio, Romanam pulchritudinem non uigiliae, sed sola deberet reuerentia custodire."

[17] Nicola Ivanoff, 'La Libreria Marciana: arte e iconologia,' *Saggi e memorie di storia dell'arte* 6 (1968), pp. 33–78, p. 55. For an ancient parallel, see Polybius, *Historiae* 6.53, who wrote that the wax masks of the forebears the great Roman families kept in their houses were colored in order to make them look like the face of a living person. During certain commemorative ceremonies a family member of a similar build as the deceased wore the mask, and cloaked himself in the progenitor's most important official robes. Thus the past generations attended to the ceremony 'in person'—literally, as *persona* in Latin means 'mask'—and their living presence was thought inspiring to their progeny; cf. Suetonius, *Vitae caesarum* 19.2 (*Vespasianus*). See also

exclusively Venetian. In cities where statues abounded, the choice to make them actually participate in celebrations was quite natural. It offered an occasion for giving a real voice to figures that otherwise spoke only through body language.

Another reason to assume that people 'consorted' easily with statues and didn't feel surprised at being addressed by them is the use of formalized gesture. In Renaissance society gesture was considered a perfect system of communication. All postures and gestures were assigned a specific meaning, as evidenced by the compendium of gesture written by Giovanni Bonifaccio at the beginning of the seventeenth century. *The Art of Gesture* (1616) is a huge catalogue of gestures and a remarkably refined elaboration of the much shorter list of gestures provided by the Roman orators. Bonifaccio explicitly stresses the link with eloquence: "After all, the art of gesture has in common with rhetoric that both the one and the other show our manners and feelings."[18]

To Bonifaccio's mind the effectiveness of gesture was not limited to real, living persons; statues and other images could also express the feelings of the represented figures. He explicitly connects gesture and the visual arts:

> These makers of statues make wonderful use of the art of gesture and signs, and that is why they are called ethical, which is to say moral, when they so perfectly counterfeit the actions and movements of man and animal that by representing their senses and emotions these would seem as Virgil says "breathing statues." And another time: "I even believe they will draw forth the features of life from marble." Of them [the sculptors] Budé has said that "they do not only fashion lifelike images, that is: in all details copied after a model, but even ethical ones, that is: with emotions almost like that of a living being." And Plato has said of works like these: "they stand like living beings, but if one asks them a question, they preserve a solemn silence."[19]

John R. Clarke, *Art in the Lives of Ordinary Romans: Visual Representation and Non-Elite Viewers in Italy, 100 B.C.–A.D. 315* (Berkeley: California University Press 2003), p. 252.

[18] Giovanni Bonifaccio, *L'arte de' cenni* (Vicenza: Francesco Grossi 1616), p. 551: "In somma l'arte de' gesti in tanto è commune con la Retorica, in quanto l'una, e l'altra dimostra i costumi, e gli affetti nostri"; *ibid*., p. 540 [printer's error; should be: 550] Bonifaccio points to another origin of the language of gesture: "Gli Oratori si come hanno da i Poeti imparato di ornatamente parlare, come da gli Histrioni hanno appresa l'arte de' gesti, ch'è, come dicemmo, parte principale della pronuntiatione."

[19] Bonifaccio, *L'arte de' cenni*, p. 616: "Questi fabricatori di statue dell'arte de' cenni, e de' gesti mirabilmente si servono; & all'hora sono detti Ethici, ciò è morali, quando cosi bene fingono gli atti, e i moti de gli huomini, e de gli animali, che rappre-

To further stress his point Bonifaccio quotes two lines from Torquato Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, from a stanza where the poet describes the wrought silver doors at the main gate of Armida's palace. They showed remarkable silver figures, which, writes Bonifaccio, "With their affectionate gestures are such as he [Tasso] says:

> Apart from speech, you won't miss anything living
> And even this doesn't lack, if you believe your eyes.[20]

In Bonifaccio's argument we encounter the important matter of expressing emotions by means of acts and gestures, discussed by Alberti as early as the 1430s. In fact, Bonifaccio equates gesture and movement. And movement was a vital prerequisite for the living presence of inanimate statues, as indeed was speaking.[21]

Enargeia: *the rhetorical demand for living images*

Ancient attestations to the apparent reality of depictions abound; texts stressing the vividness of images are so common that modern scholars have deemed them a *topos*.[22] The well-known anecdote of General Cassander (*c*. 358–297 BC), who even after Alexander's (356–323 BC)

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sentando i loro sensi, & i loro affetti, paiono come disse Virgilio Spirantia signa. Et un altra volta: Credo equidem vivos ducent de marmore vultus. Di questi il Budeo disse che non modo iconicas imagines effingunt, idest omnibus lineamentis ad exemplar expressis; sed etiam ethicas, idest sensibus expressis propemodum spirantie. E Platone disse che cosi fatte opere, tamquam viventia extant; si quid vero rogaveris, verecundi admodum silent." Bonifaccio quotes respectively from Vergil, *Georgica* 3.34: "Stabunt et Parii lapides, spirantia signa;" Vergil, *Aeneis* 6.848: "Credo equidem: vivos ducent de marmore vultus;" Guillaume Budé, ad *Pandect*. 1.3.2 (de iis quae notantur infamia), lex Athletas, in *idem*, *Opera omnia*, 4 vols. (Basilea: Nicolaus Episcopius, Jr. 1557), vol. 3, p. 131a; and Plato, *Phaedrus* 275d, translation by Harold N. Fowler (Loeb Classical Library 1919).

[20] Bonifaccio, *L'arte de' cenni*, p. 616: "Con i loro affettuosi gesti, si che, come egli disce; Manca il parlar, di vivo altro non chiedi, Nè manca questo ancor, s'à gli occhi credi." For Torquato Tasso, *Gerusalemme liberata* 16.2.7–8, see *idem*, *Opere*, ed. Bruno Maier, 5 vols. (Milan: Rizzoli 1963–65), vol. 3, p. 522.

[21] Cf. Leon Battista Alberti, *De pictura*, 2.41, in: *idem*, *On Painting and On Sculpture: The Latin Texts of* De pictura *and* De statua, ed. Cecil Grayson (London: Phaidon 1972), p. 80.

[22] See e.g. Shearman, *Only Connect*, pp. 112–18, with reference; cf. Édouard Pommier, *Il ritratto: Storia e teorie dal Rinascimento all'Età dei Lumi* [orig. *Théories du portrait*, Paris 1998], transl. Michela Scolaro (Turin: Einaudi 2003), p. 17, who gives some examples from the *Anthologia Graeca*. For a survey based on Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia*, see *The Elder Pliny's Chapters on the History of Art*, translation K. Jex-Blake [1896] (Chicago: Ares 1976).

death still exhibited signs of fear in front of his departed king's portrait bust, is characteristic of the genre.

Of course ancient anecdotes of deceptively realistic paintings in the Renaissance were well known. Thus it comes as no surprise when Paolo Pino in the *Dialogue on Painting* (1548) after the no doubt rhetorical question "And who can deny that man is often deceived, as on first glance he takes painted images to be alive?" goes on with a series of examples from Antiquity, including anecdotes about Zeuxis and Parrhasius, who both flourished in the mid-fifth century BC.[23] But the Ancients were not the sole masters; many remarks can be found in praise or awe of the lifelike quality of contemporary Renaissance art.[24] Lodovico Dolce (1508–1568) in a letter to Alessandro Contarini (1486–1553) praised Titian's figure of Venus in *Venus and Adonis* (1553), which would seem to be made of flesh and blood, not paint.[25] The work in question was a sensuous colorful painting, as was characteristic of the Venetian school, but uncolored statues made a similar effect. The idea of statues as virtually alive was commonplace, if we may believe Benedetto Varchi's remark in his treatise comparing painting and sculpture: "it is yet common saying that a statue is lacking nothing but breath and movement."[26] Raffaele Borghini (1537–1588) in his

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[23] Paolo Pino, *Dialogo di pittura*, in Barocchi, *Trattati d'arte*, vol. 1, p. 107 (quote), pp. 112–13.

[24] Several examples are quoted and commented on in Robert Williams, *Art, Theory and Culture in Sixteenth-Century Italy: From Techne to Metatechne (*Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997), p. 108.

[25] Lodovico Dolce, "Al magnifico M. Alessandro Contarini," in: [Giovanni Bottari], *Raccolta di lettere sulla pittura, scultura ed architettura*, 7 vols. (Rome: Niccolò & Marco Pagliarini 1757–73), vol. 3, pp. 257–60, p. 258: "Volge il viso a Venere con occhi allegri, e ridenti, aprendo dolcemente due labbra rosate, o pure di vivo corallo: e pare che con vezzi lascivi, ed amorosi la conforti a non temere, perciocchè tra la serenità della guardatura, e il mover della bocca dimostra manifestamente l'intrinseco del suo animo; e tutto poi serve in vece di parole." Cf. Fredrika Jacobs, "Aretino and Michelangelo, Dolce and Titian: Femmina, Masculo, Grazia," *Art Bulletin* 82 (2000), pp. 51–67, p. 61: "In his well-known letter, written in 1554 or 1555, to Alessandro Contarini, Dolce found much to praise in the painting, including the artist's rendering of the 'gratioso' and 'leggiadro' Adonis." See also Jacqueline Lichtenstein, "Éloquence du coloris: Rhétorique et mimésis dans les conceptions coloristes au 16e siècle en Italie et au 17e siècle en France," in Daniel Arasse & Georges Brunel, eds., *Symboles de la Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Paris: Presses de l'École Normale Supérieure 1980–1982), vol. 2, pp. 169–84, pp. 179–80 for references to other passages in Dolce with a similar message, which she claims to be theoretical foundations of *colorito*.

[26] Benedetto Varchi, *Lezione nella quale si disputa della maggioranza delle arti e qual sia più nobile*, in Barocchi, *Trattati d'arte*, vol. 2, pp. 1–82, p. 48: "si dice ancora volgarmente che ad una statua non manca se non lo spirito et il movimento."

lyrical description of the statues in the New Sacristy at San Lorenzo, Florence, ventured even further:

> But what shall I say when I enter the Sacristy of St. Lawrence? as at my left I see the Dawn, the Dusk, and Duke Lorenzo by the hand of the divine Michelangelo, which figures salute me, even if they keep silent with their mouths, and I answer them? If not: "Lucky marbles, fashioned by the hand of an Angel, you're not any more among the things called insensible, but among the living and immortal ones?"[27]

References to divine authorship and immortality apart, Borghini claims more for the statues than their being lifelike; nay, he greets them, answers to them, even though they remain silent to his ears. He reacts to their physical presence, clearly perceived as living, and without further ado attributes to them feelings and thoughts, and—most important—the ability to express them. In fact, Borghini treats Michelangelo's statues as equals, living among the living. His praise is set in human tones, quite different from the humorous praise of the fifteenth-century Triestine humanist Raffaele Zovenzoni (1431–*c*. 1480) of the works by the Venetian sculptor Antonio Rizzo (*c*. 1435–1499):

> Marble were the men who had looked at the Medusa;
> marble are we, Rizzo, as we have looked at your marble.[28]

There is a clear pun in these verses, keeping with humanist tradition, but Zovenzoni's meaning is sincere praise: we, the observers, grow petrified out of admiration and thus are more rigid than the stone from which Rizzo has hewn his sculpture. In the sixteenth century Anton Francesco Doni says something similar in the story about Michelangelo's *Dawn* in the New Sacristy, which we have already had occasion to quote. "Oh, what stupendous things are these! I touch her stone, and I'm moved by her flesh, and I enjoy it more than when I had

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[27] Raffaele Borghini, *Il riposo* (Florence: Giorgio Marescotti 1584), p. 163: "Ma che dirò io entrando nella Sagrestia di San Lorenzo? poiche di mano del divino Michelagnolo veggo à man manca l'Aurora[,] il Crepuscolo, & il Duca Lorenzo, le quai figure mi salutano, se ben con la bocca si tacciano, & io che risponderò loro? Se non felici marmi che per mano d'un Agnolo lavorati non siete piu fra le cose insensate descritte; ma fra le vive, & immortali."

[28] Raffaele Zovenzoni as quoted in Michelangelo Muraro, "La *Scala senza Giganti*: Iconographie et politique au Palais Ducal de Venise à la fin du XV^{e} siècle," in Daniel Arasse & Georges Brunel, eds., *Symboles de la Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Paris: Presses de l'École Normale Supérieure 1980–1982), vol. 2, pp. 21–38, p. 29: "Marmor erant homines, inspecta Gorgone; / Marmor nos sumus, inspecto marmore, Crispe, tuo."

touched living flesh. Nay, I am marble and she is flesh."[29] Authors who wanted to praise the work of an artist chose the most honorific quality they could attribute to it: living presence. This may be thought of as a mannerism, a *topos*, but it seems to have been more than that. Presumably the authors expressed a more profound and widely-held current belief that some images were alive.

Obviously, vivacity made it easier for the observer to establish a connection with a statue; observation was not limited to looking, but penetrated into the interior of what he was seeing. We might say that an exchange took place between statue and observer in which vivacity, if not an absolute condition, was at least a mighty aid. In ancient rhetoric the connection between acting and vivid performances was recognized early on because according to Greek and Roman theorists a vivid visual performance was more persuasive to an audience than a bare, factual speech.[30] The significance of this is clear if we remember the rhetorical rule which says that an orator can only move his audience if he himself portrays the emotion they should feel. And finally it is emotions that lead people towards acts and thoughts.[31]

In his treatise on rhetoric, Aristotle claimed it is necessary to visualize certain things for the better understanding of the audience. He called this visualization "putting before the eyes" and argued it was used with things related to action. He referred in this case to the metaphors of Homer, where lifeless objects like stones, arrows or spears were allotted the capacity and even the inherent wish to move. Homer "makes everything move and live, and *energeia* is motion," Aristotle summarizes the idea.[32] Only action can be put before the eyes of an audience, the word taken in the narrow sense of a relatively short sequence of deeds or motions that can be seen and experienced as an

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[29] Doni, *Marmi*, vol. 2, p. 22: "O che stupende cose son queste! Io la tocco sasso, e mi muove la carne, e mi diletta più che se viva carne io toccasse; anzi io son marmo et ella è carne."

[30] See Aristotle, *Rhetorica* 3.16.10, 1417b; Cicero, *De oratore* 3.56.214: "oratores, qui sunt veritatis ipsius actores, imitatores autem veritatis, histriones"; cf. Quintilian, *De institutione oratoria* 9.3.4–5, 11.3.61–63. Cf. Brian Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric* [1988] (Oxford: Oxford Univesity Press 1999), p. 71.

[31] Aristotle, *Rhetorica* 2.1, 1378a.

[32] Aristotle, *Rhetorica* 3.11.1–4, 1411b–1412a; translation in Aristotle, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*, newly transl. with introd., notes, and appendixes by George A. Kennedy (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press 1991), p. 249. Cf. *Rhetorica* 3.10.6, 1410b, where Aristotle states that elegance (*asteia*) needs metaphors, and thus "putting before the eyes" is *energeia*.

entity.[33] Later authors continued to comment on this combination of action and visualization, as evidenced by passages in the anonymous *Rhetoric for Herennius*, in the works of Cicero, and in Quintilian's *The Orator's Education*. It is Quintilian who gives the clearest explanation: "As for what Cicero calls 'putting something before our eyes,' this happens when, instead of stating *that* an event took place, we show *how* it took place, and that not as a whole, but in detail."[34]

The Latin mistook the concept of *energeia* (movement) that Aristotle used in *Rhetoric* with the concept of *enargeia*, which the same philosopher used in Poetics. There he is talking about the fashioning of actions by poets and combining it with visualization (*pro ommatōn tithemenon*: "put before the eyes"): "Only thus by getting the picture as clear as if he were present at the actual event, will he find what is fitting and detect contradictions."[35] Many ages later a related use of this idea can be found in pseudo-Longinus's *On the Sublime*. The author claimed that only acts that were put in the spotlights of the poet's imagination can be truly clear to an audience, for the poet transposes the light of his mental view onto the stage.[36]

Apart from the similarities (written as well as spoken) between the nouns *enargeia* and *energeia*, the main reason why Latin authors collapsed them into one concept is no doubt the visual elements inherent in both. *Enargeia* is derived from *argēs*, which means "bright, glancing" (mostly used to refer to vivid lightning, so of something moving) and "shining, white" (mostly said of fat, chalky soils, and thus

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[33] For the difference between time and condensated action, see also Aristotle, *Poetica* 17, 1455a and 1459a.

[34] *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.34.45, like Aristotle, states that metaphors are used "rei ante oculos ponendae causa," cf. 4.55.68: "Demonstratio est cum ita verbis res exprimitur ut geri negotium et res ante oculos videatur;" Cicero, *De oratore* 3.53.202: "illustris explanatio rerumque quasi gerantur sub aspectum paene subiectio;" Cicero, *Orator* 40.139: "saepe etiam rem dicendo subiciet oculis;" Quintilian, *De institutione oratoria* 9.2.40 (quote): "Illa vero, ut ait Cicero, sub oculos subiectio tum fieri solet, cum res non gesta indicatur, sed ut sit gesta ostenditur, nec universa, sed per partis: quem locum proximo libro subiecimus evidentiae." Translation by Donald A. Russell (Loeb Classical Library 2001). Cf. Polybius, *Historiae* 6.53.1–3 on the Roman funerary oration, which ought to bring the dead man's great deeds before the eyes of the audience.

[35] Aristotle, *Poetica* 17, 1455a; translation by W. Hamilton Fyfe (Loeb Classical Library 1927). Kennedy in Aristotle, *On Rhetoric*, p. 315 comments on *energeia*: "Confused by some later writers with *enargeia*, which means 'clarity' or 'vividness' but does not occur in the *Rhetoric*."

[36] Pseudo-Longinus, *De sublimitate* 15.1.

of objects). *Enargeia* then is (the result of) flooding something with bright, shining light, and hence it meant "cleanliness," "distinctness" and "a clear view."[37] But we might say it is also what we now call "highlighting," although that is not a standard translation. Undeniably a highlight makes things far more visible and precise than a common light can do, let alone if the things remain shaded. Without light, there is no vision; hence Aristotle derived *phantasia*, which in Antiquity and the Renaissance was considered the faculty that transformed mainly visual sensations into mental images, from *phaos, phōs*: "light." And again we find light in the terminology for "clearness" and "liveliness" used by the Latin rhetoricians. Quintilian refers to the "*enargeia*, what Cicero calls *illustratio* and *evidentia*, a quality which makes us seem not so much to be talking about something as exhibiting it. Emotions will ensue just as if we were present at the event itself."[38] The light shed by the orator over the events he recounts and mimics makes us see them as if we were participants in the action. The coupling of light and action, of visibility and motion here is complete.

If we take all this into consideration, the often observed conflation of the concepts *enargeia* and *energeia* by Renaissance authors is actually quite logical; these theorists developed what they found with their Ancient predecessors.[39] They avidly absorbed the idea of a lively rendering of facts by representing them in visually clear and thus immediately understandable scenes that gave the audience the impression of actually witnessing the original action. And they agreed upon the function

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[37] Henry George Liddell & Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, rev. and augmented ed. Henry Stuart Jones *et al.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1996), *s.v.*

[38] Quintilian, *De institutione oratoria* 6.2.32 (on basis of Cicero, *De partitione oratoria* 6.20): "*enargeia*, quae a Cicerone inlustratio et evidentia nominatur, quae non tam dicere videtur quam ostendere, et adfectus non aliter, quam si rebus ipsis intersimus, sequentur." Translation by Donald A. Russell (Loeb Classical Library 2001). Cf. Ansgar Kemmann in Gert Ueding, ed., *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik* (Tubingen: Niemeyer 1992–), *s.v.* 'Evidentia,' vol. 3, col. 33: "Die Schöpfung des Wortes geht auf Cicero zurück [*Academica* 2.17], der *evidentia* zu *videor* nach *eluceo*, *elucens* 'hervorleuchten' bildet, um so das griechische *enárgeia* ins Lateinische zu übersetzen." See Thomas O. Sloane, *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2001), p. 51 about the graphic clarity (*evidentia*, *enargeia*) conferred to an object by ekphrasis. Epicurus, according to Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus mathematicos* 7.203 = *Adversus dogmaticos* 1.203 equated *enargeia* and *phantasia* (cf. *ibid.*, 8.70 = 2.70, and Diogenes Laërtius, *Vitae* 7.51), both meaning "evidence of sense."

[39] See e.g. Shearman, *Only Connect*, pp. 209–12; Valeska von Rosen, "Die Enargeia des Gemäldes: Zu einem vergessenen Inhalt des *Ut-pictura-poesis* und seiner Relevanz für das cinquecenteske Bildkonzept," *Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft* 27 (2000), pp. 171–208, pp. 174–76; Barbara Vinken, *Du Bellay und Petrarca: Das Rom der Renaissance* (Tubingen: Niemeyer 2001), pp. 19–29.

of light. Therefore *enargeia* never completely lost its original meaning. Francesco Bocchi (1548–*c*. 1613) in his essay on Andrea del Sarto and also in his city guide of Florence writes about the *chiaroscuro* that helps to highlight the essential parts of a picture or a view.[40] And what Bocchi observed in painting, the Ferrarese poet Torquato Tasso tried to achieve in poetry, in order to give certain passages their own "light" and hence power of expression.[41] But although in painting the use of highlighting, the play of *chiaroscuro*, was most effective in obtaining a focus on the picture plane and enhancing the visibility of the central action by letting secondary figures recede in relative obscurity, it was not sufficient to give the image liveliness. Only motion, *energia* in the sense of Aristotelian *energeia*, was able to do that. However difficult to achieve, artists were expected to fashion their figures as if they were moving. Many authors, of different backgrounds, stressed the importance of motion.[42] The clearest phrasing perhaps is to be found with Lodovico Dolce in the dialogue *Aretino*:

> What remains is to talk about the movements, a most necessary part, both pleasing and stupendous: for in fact it is pleasing, and makes the eyes of the observers wonder at seeing an inanimate thing of stone, canvas, or wood that seems to move.[43]

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[40] Francesco Bocchi, *Discorso sopra l'eccellenza dell'opere d'Andrea del Sarto, pittore fiorentino*, in Robert Williams, "A Treatise by Francesco Bocchi in Praise of Andrea del Sarto," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 52 (1989), pp. 111–39, p. 126: "una certa chiarezza che la illuminava et la faceva riguardata sopra l'altre;" Francesco Bocchi, *Le bellezze della città di Fiorenza* (Florence: Bartolomeo Sermartelli 1591), p. 111: "La luce intorno à gli Angeli per lo contrario del grande scuro della notte ha gran forza in se di vero porre innanzi à gli occhi, anzi di recare altrui nella mente quello, che è scritto nel Vangelo."

[41] Roy T. Eriksen, *The Building in the Text: Alberti to Shakespeare and Milton* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press 2001), p. 45: "*Enargeia* (*illustratio*) therefore refers to the impact made by the configuration of visible and audible rhetorical figures (*lumina*) in a given text." Cf. *ibid*., p. 113: 'In terms of composition, then, we can analyse the music of Tasso's poetry as realized in his use of *dispositio* and *elocutio*—in the way he shapes and distributes textual units devoted to particular events and how the words on the page serve to indicate and integrate these units. This abstract form of mimesis inevitably produces an *enargeia* totally different in kind from the effect created by vivid description (ekphrasis) alone. It is an *enargeia* where the distribution of words as signs creates its own luster and 'music.'"

[42] One may think of authors like Pomponius Gauricus (*c*. 1481–*c*. 1528), Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519), Francisco de Holanda (*c*. 1517–1585), Lodovico Dolce (1508–1568), Giovanni Andrea Gilio (died 1584), Gabriele Paleotti (1522–1597), Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo (1538–1592) or Francesco Bocchi (1548–*c*. 1613).

[43] Lodovico Dolce, *Dialogo della pittura, intitolato L'Aretino* (Venice: Gabriele Giolito de' Ferrari 1557), p. 36r.: "Resta a dire delle moventie, parte ancora ella necessarissima, & aggradevole, e di stupore: che aggradevole è nel vero, e fa stupire

If one accepts the rhetorical setting of the visual arts, the necessity of action and motion is evident: only action will lead to emotions, and only emotions will bring about persuasion. And persuasion, one way or another, was the goal of the visual arts under discussion.

Lifelikeness, verisimilitude, realism: what made one connect

To suggest motion in their works artists could opt for and combine several strategies. First, they could look for compositional solutions like *chiaroscuro* or other types of lighting strategies, as well as experimenting with perspective and proportion. Second, they could present their figures in all types of postures and manners, using the standardized gestures of actors and orators. As we have seen, gestures as such were read as signs and in an image it can suggest motion. According to Cicero suggestion is more important than completeness: "It behoves the orator to borrow merely a suspicion of mimicry, so that his hearer may imagine more than meets his eye."[44] Extrapolating this dictum we may assume that the suggestion of motion in an immoveable image will seduce the observer into seeing more to it than there really is, and thus into perceiving motion. But pride of place in the catalogue of strategies to make images lifelike (and hence inherently moving, as living beings are seldom static) was realism: a careful and for every observer immediately recognizable representation of the world we live in. It would seem that man is best persuaded by what he perceives as real. Exactly this is the claim of Giovan Paolo Lomazzo (1538–1592) in the *Treatise on the Art of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture*. Invoking the authority of Horace he writes:

> And not only do these motions in a figure so lively expressed after nature confer grace, but also they make the same effect as the real ones usually

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gli occhi de' riguardanti, vedere in sasso, in tela, o in legno una cosa inanimata, che par, che si mova." Cf. Gabriele Paleotti, *Discorso intorno all imagini sacre e profane* 2.2, in Barocchi, *Trattati d'arte*, vol. 2, pp. 117–509, p. 269. For the other authors, see Von Rosen, "Die Enargeia des Gemäldes," pp. 173–78, with extensive references. Movement in literature, cf. Torquato Tasso, *Discorsi dell'arte poetica* 3, ed. Luigi Poma (Bari: Laterza 1964), p. 47: "necessaria è in lui [*scil.* il poeta] l'energia, la quale sì con parole pone inanzi a gli occhi la cosa che pare altrui non di udirla, ma vederla." Cf. Eriksen, *The Building in the Text*, p. 118.

[44] Cicero, *De oratore* 2.49.242: "Orator surripiat oportet imitationem ut quis qui audiet, cogitet plura, quam videat." Translation by E.W. Sutton & H. Rackham (Loeb Classical Library 1942).

> do. Because of the fact that if someone in real life is laughing, or weeping, or showing any other emotion, and will, by that, move the others who see him to the same emotion of joy or sorrow, the poet said: "if you want me to wail you'll have to mourn yourself first, and then your misfortunes will hurt me."[45]

A similar view was expressed by Francesco Bocchi in his essay on Donatello's *St. George*. In this tract, essentially a panegyric on the naturalistic, lively representation of the saint, the author maintains there exists a close bond between liveliness (*vivacità*) and beauty (*bellezza*), and he even goes so far as to advance the thesis that beauty, apart from classical ideas of equilibrium and decorum, in fact "consists in action."[46]

During the Renaissance the demand for realism was constantly reiterated, as often as not with explicit reference to the Ancients. In *On Painting* Leon Battista Alberti provides the painter with a sound reason for working after nature, though he warns him against copying reality without looking for beauty; a mere 'photographic' picture was not to his taste.[47] His demand for plastic and realistic painting, repeated several times in the treatise and according to its author an extra spur to study nature, presumably is attuned to his stress on the representation of human beings.[48]

Most advice to follow nature and work in a naturalistic manner is phrased as a universally accepted truth.[49] An explanation for why this

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[45] Giovan Paolo Lomazzo, *Trattato dell'arte della pittura, scoltura et architettura* 2.1, in *idem*, *Scritti sulle arti*, ed. Roberto Paolo Ciardi, 2 vols. (Florence: Marchi & Bertolli 1974), vol. 2, p. 95, quoting Horace, *De arte poetica* 103–104: "E non solamente questi moti cosí vivamente dal naturale espressi in una figura apportano grazia, ma fanno anco il medesimo effetto che sogliono fare i naturali. Perciò che, sí come naturalmente uno che rida, o pianga, o faccia altro effetto, muove, per il piú, gl'altri che lo veggono al medesimo effetto d'allegrezza o di dolore, onde diceva colui, "si vis me flere dolendum est primum ipsi tibi, tunc [*recte*: tum] tua me infortunia ledent'." Cf. *ibid*., 2.1, ed. Ciardi 1974, vol. 2, p. 96: "dico che essendo questi moti cosí possenti in comovere gl'animi quando sono espresso in guisa che paiano naturali."

[46] Bocchi, *Eccellenza*, in Barocchi, *Trattati d'arte*, vol. 3, pp. 160, 169, 182 (quote:) "perché la bellezza consiste in atto"; cf. *ibid*., 153: "La vita nostra, io dico quella parte che noi virtuosamente viviamo, è tutta azzione e vivacità."

[47] Alberti, *De pictura* 3.55, ed. Grayson, p. 98; cf. Aristotle, *Poetica* 15, 1454b: a portrait is always an imitation of reality, but beautified.

[48] Alberti, *De pictura* 2.32, 3.52 (plasticity of paintings) and 2.35, 2.42, 3.55 (study of nature).

[49] See e.g. Dolce, *Aretino*, p. 12r–v: "ufficio adunque del Pittore è di rappresentare con l'arte sua qualunque cosa, talmente simile alle diverse opere della natura, ch'ella paia vera." Also: Daniele Barbaro, transl. & ed., *I dieci libri dell'architettura di*

realism was necessary, may be found in the young Daniel Barbaro's (1514–1570) dialogue *On Eloquence*. In this early work he states that things which closely resemble the original—sitter or prototype—are recognizable to everyone, without external help:

> The sign of the resemblance is found somehow on the surface of things that are received without mental reasoning and captured by the human senses; from this springs the verisimilar, which appears equally to all people.[50]

Barbaro is discussing aspects of rhetoric, but the argument ties in with Alberti's views on naturalism in the visual arts: a figure or object's recognizability is enhanced if it resembles nature. Archbishop Gabriele Paleotti adheres to a similar view while he, almost like an historical anthropologist, maintains that the simple people of early times always had represented complex ideas by forms they saw in nature, and never with symbols or other artificial signs without resemblance to natural objects. Nature, says Paleotti, they could understand, and thus it was by natural things that they expressed abstract concepts.[51]

The church, too, adhered to naturalism. Post-Tridentine authors demanded that the Bible be represented as close to the letter as possible.[52] If artists needed to supplement a story in order to achieve a convincing result, their inventions ought to be scriptural and absolutely verisimilar.[53] The artists followed suit. In Rome the Company of St. Luke included in its statutes "that those who paint images of the Lord,

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M. Vitruvio, 2d, rev. edition (Venice: Francesco de' Franceschi & Giovanni Chrieger 1567), p. 32: "con l'arte si cerca di rappresentare gli effetti alla natura simiglianti."

[50] Daniele Barbaro, *Della eloquenza*, ed. Girolamo Ruscelli (Venice: Vicenzo Valgrisio 1557), p. 25: "Il segno della simiglianza alcuna fiata si ritroua in essa superficie delle cose, che senza discorso di ragione sono ricevute, e apprese da i sensi umani; da ciò nasce il verosimile, che par egualmente a tutti."

[51] Paleotti, *Imagini* 1.5, in Barocchi, *Trattati d'arte*, vol. 2, p. 144: "in quei primi tempi, ne' quali erano inculti gli ingegni e poco esercitati nella disciplina delle cose, più facilmente si appigliassero o si dessero le persone a quelle arti ch'aveano minore difficoltà, e così prima attendessero a rappresentare con figure le cose ch'avevano inanzi gli occhi, che ad imaginarsi segni e caratteri artificiati, che non hanno conformità alcuna con le cose create." In fact this reasoning holds equally true for the illiterate of Paleotti's own times, who far more easily could understand and imitate "cose naturali" than the learned, but very opaque "cose artificiali" of the humanists.

[52] Apart from Paleotti one may think of Johannes Molanus (1533–1585), Raffaele Borghini (1537–1588), Gregorio Comanini (1550–1608), and Giovanni Andrea Gilio (died 1584).

[53] Anthony Blunt, *Artistic Theory in Italy, 1450–1600* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1940), pp. 111–13.

the Virgin, and the other male and female saints, have to depict them honestly, otherwise they will be pulled down and destroyed and the painters will be punished, so let everyone be on his guard against bad enterprise."[54] The honesty mentioned in the text here has the double meaning of "naturalistic" and "decorous." The Holy Family should be depicted "honestly," according to common tradition, in keeping with ecclesiastical directives, and most certainly not nude or semi-nude if the Bible or other religious writing like hagiography did not offer any authority for it.

In Giovanni Andrea Gilio's reflection that "in all things one has to maintain the order of nature, and everything that may fall under well-regulated poetry is allowed to the painter and the poet" we find, apart from the conviction that art may imitate everything for which in nature can be found an example, the fear for what is indecorous and unheard of.[55] Obviously, this fear and the demands of creating realistic and literal representations of Biblical and other religious stories inspired by them, have found their strongest expression in the ambit of the church, the more so because a deviation of the rule might lead the faithful into erroneous ideas, which eventually would jeopardize the creed. The Truth of the Christian message would be compromised if the visual representations of that message looked false. Conversely ecclesiastical authorities considered realism the most effective means to bring home to the faithful the message of the Scriptures. By being visually true-to-life representations would look verisimilar, and thus recognizable and comprehensible, and so eventually lead to imitation of their morals and manners by the churchgoing observers. Examples of this train of thought can be indicated with authors like Lancelotto Politi, Johannes Molanus, and Gabriele Paleotti.[56] Especially the last

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[54] As quoted by Pascal Griener, "L'énonciation rhétorique: Les fresques de Francesco Salviati au Palazzo Ricci-Sacchetti (1553–1554)," in Gerhart Schröder *et al.*, eds., *Anamorphosen der Rhetorik: Die Wahrheitsspiele der Renaissance* (Munich: Fink 1997), pp. 207–30, p. 225: "che quelli che dipingono le imagine del Signore e della Madonna et de alteri sancti e sancte, le habiano a dipingere honeste, altramente le si butteranno et guasteranno et loro serranno gastigati, et che ognun se guardi della mala ventura."

[55] Giovanni Andrea Gilio, *Degli errori de' pittori circa l'historie*, in Barocchi, *Trattati d'arte*, vol. 2, pp. 1–115, p. 18: "in tutte le cose si deggia servare l'ordine della natura, e tutto quello che può cadere sotto ben regolata poesia è concesso al pittore et al poeta."

[56] Ambrosius Catharinus Politi, *Disputatio de cultu & adoratione imaginum*, in: *idem*, *Enarrationes in quinque priora capita libri Geneseos. Adduntur plerique alij*

one mentioned shows himself thoroughly influenced by ancient rhetorical ideas on realism and verisimilitude, and in keeping with these was severely critical of stylistic devices like amplification, because they would make objects and figures look unreal, and this unnaturalness would inevitably elicit false reactions.[57] Unlike the German Reformers, who criticized credulous worshippers and presented images as being mere wood and paint, or stone, the Italian Counter-Reformation sought to use the live qualities of religious images for the ethical education of the people. Inevitably, this rhetorically inspired quest for veracity and living presence jeopardized the firm distinction the Council of Trent had established between an image and its prototype.[58]

In antique rhetorical and literary thought naturalness was praised because perceptible reality (or verisimilitude) provided an audience with an easy means to connect with the performance they witnessed or the work they were reading. Fantasy (in the modern sense) was acceptable in as far as it proposed things that might exist in real life.[59] Hence

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tractatus et quaestiones rerum variarum, 3 vols. (Rome: Antonio Blado 1551–52), vol. 3, pp. 122–44, p. 144; Johannes Molanus, *De historia sanctarum imaginum* (Louvain: Jean Bogard 1594), 2.19, pp. 36r–37v; Paleotti, *Imagini* 2.21, in Barocchi, *Trattati d'arte*, vol. 2, p. 344.

[57] Paleotti, *Imagini* 1.15, in Barocchi, *Trattati d'arte*, vol. 2, pp. 344–45: "raccordiamo al pittore che egli, nel fare ritratti, non si scosti punto dalla verità, servando in questo la regola dell'istorico, che narra il fatto come è stato, e non dell'oratore, che spesso amplifica et estenua le cose; peroché, oltre l'errore in che il pittore incorre mancando della dovuta imitazione, potrebbe causare talora col suo artificio molto pregiudicio ad alcuno, onde dovrà essere in ciò grandemente avvertito, né cedere a prieghi di chi che sia, essendo questo vizio de molti, e massime di alcune donnicciole, che ambiscono di essere ritratte con la faccia colorita e graziosa, credendosi pur troppo con questo mezzo di diventare più belle, che è cosa ridicola, come scrive Luciano, eccetto se, mediante la sua arte veracemente esercitata, potesse occultare con bel giudicio alcuno difetto della persona." What held true for portraits, was a fortiori true for religious art. The archbishop thus seems to have been a declared opponent of what Shearman, *Only Connect*, pp. 207–27 dubbed "heroic" paintings. The hyperbole in several pieces by Raphael, Titian and Correggio, whose rhetorical inspiration pointed out by Shearman cannot be denied, are unverisimilar by virtue of their exaggeration, and thus cannot be considered examples of the idiom preferred by Paleotti. For precision in portraits, cf. Pommier, *Il ritratto*, p. 112.

[58] For the views of German Reformers, see Joseph Leo Koerner, *The reformation of the image* (London: Reaktion Books 2004), especially 94–103. For the distinction of the Council of Trent, see the *Decreta concilii tridentini*, sessio 25, titulus 1, in Giuseppe Alberigo *et al*., eds., *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, 3d ed. (Bologna: Istituto per le Scienze religiose 1973), p. 775.

[59] So for instance Aristotle, *Poetica* 7, 1451a; 8, 1451a; 9, 1451b; 24, 1460a; 25, 1460b and 1461b; *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 3.22.36–37; Cicero, *De oratore* 3.45.178,

the Renaissance authors' warm praise of sayings like 'what exists or may exist' and their abhorrence of inventions in art that could not to be found in nature.[60] A fine summary of these ideas can be found in the dialogue *On Poetical Invention* (1554) by the mid-sixteenth-century literary scholar Alessandro Lionardi:

> But the best is the imitation that is founded upon the real and is embellished and enriched with many verisimilar things; it's like the orator does while exposing his cases, of which the facts are to him the foundations that he then enriches and embellishes by verisimilar reasons. And like the art is doing better if aided by nature, in the same way the verisimilar is more valuable each time it has reality as its aid and foundation.[61]

Reasoning along these lines made it expedient that even fantasy looked real. As for statues of human beings, they only look real if they move and speak.

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cf. Cicero, *Topica* 26.97; Horace, *Ars poetica* 338.

[60] E.g. Vitruvius, *De architectura* 7.5.3; cf. Barbaro, *Vitruvio*, p. 321: "perche se la pittura è una imitatione delle cose, che sono, o che possono essere, come potremo dire, che stia bene quello, che nelle Grottesche si vede?" See also Giovan Francesco Pico della Mirandola, *De imaginatione* 2, ed. and transl. Harry Caplan (New Haven: Cornell University Press 1930), p. 30, where he warns against the dangerous autonomous actions of the *imaginatio*. The creation of things that cannot exist Pico sees as far less threatening than the creation of things that do not exist but appear to be possible. "Jam imaginari possumus pro arbitrio etiam quae non sunt, neque esse possunt; opinari autem vel scire factu impossibilia in nostra potestate non est. Cum terrificum inter aliquod opiniamur, metu concutimur; cum imaginamur, non magis afficimur quam si picturam aliquam horribilem contemplaremur, nisi eam imaginationem opinio consequatur." On the authority of Aristotle, *De anima* 3.3, 427b14–17 Pico in fact states that man can deem a representation of something "untruthful" and just ignore it—unless he is seduced to believe what he sees. As such this is an invitation to fashion things on show in such a way as to seduce the observer into believing them to be true. This implies the use of rhetoric, which aims at influencing *opiniones*. Here we may find another explanation for the ancient and Renaissance abhorrence of grotesques and the like: according to *opinio* they cannot exist. But hominids can and do exist, so they are capable of moving opinions.

[61] Alessandro Lionardi, *Della inventione poetica*, in Bernard Weinberg, ed., *Trattati di poetica e di retorica del Cinquecento*, 4 vols. (Bari: Laterza 1970–74), vol. 2, pp. 211–92, pp. 271–72: "Ma miglior sia quella imitatione che sarà fondata sopra il vero e che sia ornata et arrichita di molti verisimili; così come fa l'oratore nel disputar le cause, le quali gli dànno i fondamenti che sono gli stati loro, et egli poscia con ragioni verisimili l'arrichisce et adorna. E come l'arte riesce meglio quando ella è aiutata insieme dalla natura, così il verisimile assai più vale qualunque volta ha per suo aiuto e fondamento il vero."

Reciprocity: the influence of the human figure

To bring these reflections on the theme of the moving and speaking statue to an end, we will broach one more subject: the remarkable preference for human figures in Renaissance art and the main reason for it.

In his answer to the survey by Benedetto Varchi, dated 12 February 1548, the painter and architect Giorgio Vasari (1511–1574) states with some emphasis that lifelike portraits deceive the eye of the beholder; erroneously the viewer believes that the image is alive.[62] Hence the observer reacts to the represented person or character (as, for instance, in Biblical or mythological scenes) as one human being towards another. On the part of the viewer artistic observations initially play no part in this exchange. Several authors ascribe this response to the fact that humanity is mainly charmed and attracted by other humans. Giovan Francesco Pico della Mirandola (1470–1533) presents it as an obvious truth that "from the very origin of nature we bear engraved in us the precept to love our kind."[63] Paolo Pino (1534–1565) showed how common the concept was in his times, summarizing it in half a sentence: "because one sees expressed that all creatures desire their likes."[64] Bartolomeo Maranta (*c.* 1500–1571) in his essay on Titian's *Annunciation* in Naples saw it in function of perceiving beauty—"But because to man isn't conceded to behold a more beautiful embodiment than that of man himself"—and used it to explain why painters concentrate on the depiction of human figures.[65] This logic brought Maranta close to Cicero, who indeed expressed the view that people imagine their gods to their own likeness, because man never sees anything more beautiful than the human form.[66]

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[62] Varchi, *Maggioranza*, in Barocchi, *Trattati d'arte*, vol. 1, p. 62.

[63] Pico, *Imaginatio* 10, ed. Caplan, p. 76: "cumque ab ipso naturae ortu insculptum geramus, ut similes diligamus." Translation by Caplan, *ibid.*, p. 77.

[64] Pino, *Pittura*, in Barocchi, *Trattati d'arte*, vol. 1, p. 133: "perché si vede espresso che tutte le creature appetiscono il loro simile."

[65] Bartolomeo Maranta, *Discorso in materia di pittura*, in Paola Barocchi, ed., *Scritti d'arte del Cinquecento*, 3 vols. (Milan / Naples: Ricciardi 1971–77), vol. 1, pp. 863–900, p. 867: "Ma perché all'uomo non è stato conceduto di veder più bella vesta di quella dell'uomo istesso"; cf. *ibid.*, pp. 874–75: "La bellezza umana […] alla sua perfezione richiede debita proporzione, debita quantità e convenevola vivacità di colore et [oltre a] ciò una certa grazia in tutte tre queste cose, che per altro nme siamo usi dir leggiadria."

[66] Politi, *De cultu … imaginum*, p. 125, quoting Cicero, writes: "Quicumque Deum imaginatur sive vigilans sive per somnium dormiens, nullam aliam illi formam tribuere

As to the agency of realistically rendered representations of human figures, the delight man gets from looking at his own kind and the close relation of divine and human beauty were not the only constituents, although they played a fundamental role. An additional cause for such representations was expressed by Leon Battista Alberti who believed that nature especially covets things that resemble herself: "A 'historia' will move spectators when the men painted in the picture outwardly demonstrate their own feelings as clearly as possible. Nature provides—and there is nothing to be found more rapacious of her like than she—that we mourn with the mourners, laugh with those who laugh, and grieve with the grief-stricken."[67] This brings Alberti back to Horace's "if you want me to wail," and gives him the ancient authority Renaissance authors were always looking for. Clearly, the idea that an exchange of similar reactions is only possible between equals was quite natural to him. From this concept of human emotional exchange it was but a step to the idea that in the visual arts only human figures would provoke emotions in the beholder, provided they were represented as if alive. Alberti was prepared to make that step, and especially in the sixteenth century many theorists followed him.[68] The most complete argument of why a true-to-life human figure is an effective agent is found in Giovan Paolo Lomazzo's *Treatise on the Art of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture* (1585). The author points out that it is not the human figure as such to which effectiveness can be ascribed, but the character which really has something in common with his fellow-man, be they friends, partners in conversation, or observers. The exchange of emotions, as well as of ideas and manners, takes place easiest between equals. "And so if we want to discuss all other effects a human body can make," Lomazzo gives us to understand,

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potest quam humanam, cum nullam nos videamus spectabiliorem." The work he is referring to is Cicero, *De natura deorum* 1.18.46: "Nam a natura habemus omnes omnium gentium speciem nullam aliam nisi humanam deorum; quae enim forma alia occurrit umquam aut vigilanti aut dormienti?"

[67] Alberti, *Pictura* 2.41, ed. Grayson, p. 80: "Animos deinde spectantium movebit historia, cum qui aderunt picti homines suum animi motum maxime prae se ferent. Fit namque natura, qua nihil sui similium rapacius inveniri potest, ut lugentibus conlugeamus, ridentibus adrideamus, dolentibus condoleamus." Translation by Grayson, *ibid*., p. 81.

[68] See e.g. Bocchi, *Andrea del Sarto*, in Williams, "A Treatise by Francesco Bocchi," p. 128.

> we always will find in them a certain power, almost a magical force, which by means of similarity leads the others into ranging themselves around this one and move according to it. […] it is said that man can work upon other man only by emotion and manner. Hence we are advised to flee and keep completely aloof from the company of men of corrupt and debased manner, because their spirit, like a pestiferous and contagious breath, infects the person near to them; and conversely to embrace relations with good and well-mannered people, for from them one gets marvellous support. But to return to our main argument, I say once more that while all mutations by similarity mentioned can take place in all bodies, nonetheless many more can and will take place in the ones with a certain intrinsical conformity of mind *and* body.[69]

The conclusion to be drawn from Lomazzo's argument seems inescapable: equals naturally consort with equals, so if a representation is experienced as an equal, its influence will be assured.

Only connect… and they'll shape your views

In 1992 Kenneth Gross published a study called *The Dream of the Moving Statue*, in which he strove to show that since Antiquity Western society has tried to see living characteristics in statues because mankind dreams of being demiurges, creators of life almost equal to God.[70] The purpose of this essay is quite different: it tries to make sense of the many references to moving and speaking statues in Italian writing of the later Renaissance. None of the quoted passages refers to the powers of creation. Instead, the speaking statues are described as if they were living humans, who talked with their equals, comforted them in their worries, and occasionally proffered advise. In all probability this mat-

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[69] Lomazzo, *Trattato* 2.6, ed. Ciardi 1974, vol. 2, pp. 106–107: "E cosí se vogliamo discorrere per tutti gl'altri effetti che un corpo umano può fare, troveremo sempre in loro un certo che di potere e quasi occulta forza che per via di similitudine induce gl'altri a contraere di quello, e secondo esso muoversi. […] si dice che l'uomo solamente con l'affetto et abito opera nell'altro uomo. Onde siamo ammoniti di dover fuggire e del tutto appartarsi dalla compagnia de gl'uomini di costumi corrotti e perduti, perché l'anima di questi tali, come con spirar pestifero e contagioso, infetta chi gli sta vicino; e di rincontro abbracciar la pratica de buoni e costumati, perciò che se ne trae maraviglioso giovamento. Ma ripigliando quel che è di nostro principal proponimento, dico ch'ancora che tutte le dette mutazioni per similitudine possano aver luogo in tutti i corpi, nondimeno molto piú possono et hanno luogo in quelli dove è una certa et intrinseca conformità, cosí d'animo, come di corpo."

[70] Kenneth Gross, *The Dream of the Moving Statue* (Ithaca / London: Cornell University Press 1992).

ter of fact acceptance of living human characteristics in otherwise dead objects of metal or stone was founded on the striking realism of many statues. Patrons who commissioned such images knew that this would be the case. They urged their artists to make their statues as true to life as possible. For in the end, they had nearly always an ulterior motive when ordering a statue to be placed in the public realm. A statue had to persuade its viewers into connecting with it and into taking it as a model of the virtue(s) it stood for. The best way to persuade an audience, so the teachings of rhetoric, was to play on their emotions; and emotions, according to accepted views at the time, were most effectively stirred by living beings, especially by fellow human beings. As the writings studied in this essay suggest, many statues achieved what was expected of them. They seemed to move and to speak, and thus were capable of engaging their visitors into lively exchanges that in turn may have shaped or changed these viewers' views.

6. IMAGES, EFFICACY & RITUAL IN THE RENAISSANCE: BURNING THE DEVIL AND DUSTING THE MADONNA

Fredrika H. Jacobs

> Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
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> —Hebrews 11:1–3

Among the decrees issued at the conclusion of the twenty-fifth and final session of the Council of Trent on December 4, 1563, was one setting forth the position of the Roman Catholic Church concerning the efficacy of intercession, the veneration of holy relics, and the honoring of sacred images. Reaffirming Thomas Aquinas's *Summa theologica*, 2.92.2, which asserts that worship performed in the wrong manner (*modo indebito*) or directed to the wrong subject (*ei cui non debit exhiberi*) constituted an error of faith, the assembled prelates voiced a "desire to root out utterly any abuses that may have crept into these holy and saving practices." To this end, the Council mandated "all superstition be removed from the use of sacred images (*omnis superstitio in imaginum sacro usu tollatur*)."[1] Clergy at all levels were instructed to ensure that parishioners were mindful of the fact that when "we kiss" an image or "go down on our knees" before it we do so because the "honor shown is referred" to those whose "likeness (*similitudinem*)" is represented and decidedly not to the representation itself.

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[1] *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, ed. and trans. Henry Joseph Schroeder (St. Louis and London: B. Herder Books, 1941), p. 216. I have slightly altered Schroeder's translation. For yet another version, see Norman P. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 vols. (London: Sheed & Ward; Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990), 2, pp. 775–76. Following a protracted suspension of meetings, the Council was called back into session by Pope Pius IV on November 29, 1560. More than a year would pass before attendees could gather for the first session on January 18, 1562. The conclave of bishops at the second Nicene Council had stated in unequivocal terms that "the honor shown to the image is transferred to the prototype, and whoever honors an image honors the person represented by it (Imaginis enim honor ad primitivum (prototypon) transit; et qui adorat imaginem, adorat in ea depicti subsistentiam)." See *Conciliorum Oecumeniorum decreta*, as cited in Henk Van Os, *The Art of Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe, 1300–1500* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), p. 173, n. 2.

No one is to "ask" something of or "expect" anything from an image "as was done by the pagans of old." Placing "confidence" of any sort in a material object was emphatically prohibited.[2] A Tudor *Homily* that dates to the same year as Trent's final meeting encapsulates the nature of the problem confronting Rome. "The ignorant and the common people are deceived by the cunning of the workman, and the beauty of the image to do honor unto it," for they believe that saints "should in those places, yea, in the images themselves, have a dwelling."[3] As Manuel do Valle de Moura's *De in cantantionibus seu ensalmis*, 1620, makes clear, indeed as thousands of ex-votos framing sacred images demonstrate, devotional practices involving the use of images (*ex opera operato*) remained obfuscated by the specter of *superstitio* long after the Council of Trent had adjourned.[4] This was especially true of activities involving ecclesiastical medicine (*medicine ecclesiastiche*), including rituals designed to exorcise demons. Moreover, beginning in the 1570s and following a period dedicated to quashing heresy, the scrutinizing attention of Catholic authorities shifted toward acts of magic, signs of superstition, and the misuse of the holy.[5] Throughout the Catholic world, councils assembled to clarify Tridentine policies dealing with these very issues. The Council of Malines, 1607, was among them. Although the doctrinal position of Malines echoed that of Trent, the documents published by each council differ. The difference is not one of content and substance but rather one of textual arrangement and its implications. Trent's reference to *superstitio* comes as a caution within the section "On the Veneration of Saints and the Honoring of Images" and is directed specifically to the susceptibility of the "unlettered" to

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[2] Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2, pp. 775–76.

[3] *Certain Sermons and Homilies Appointed to be Read in Churches, in the Time of Queen Elizabeth, of famous memory: and now thought fit to be reprinted by authority from the King's Most Excellent Majesty: with pious reflections and spiritual observations* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1822), p. 210.

[4] Mary R. O'Neil, "*Sacerdote ovvero strione*: Ecclesiastical and Superstitious Remedies in 16th Century Italy," in *Understanding Popular Culture: Europe from the Middle Ages to the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Steven L. Kaplan (Berlin and New York: Mouton Publishers, 1984), pp. 53–83; and Mary O'Neil, "Magical Healing, Love Magic and the Inquisition in Late Sixteenth-Century Modena," in *Inquisition and Society in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Stephen Haliczar (Totowa, NJ: Barnes and Noble Books, 1987), pp. 88–114.

[5] O'Neil, 1984, p. 55; and Guido Ruggiero, *Binding Passions: Tales of Magic, Marriage, and Power at the End of the Renaissance* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 9–10.

"representations of false doctrine." By contrast, the Council of Malines made superstition the topic of its own discreet section composed of four, short chapters (*capiti*). Significantly, it follows the five-chapter section "*De imaginibus & sanctorum reliquiis*." The sequence is not inconsequential. In fact, it is impossible to read the third chapter of "*De Superstitione*," which begins by acknowledging that the uneducated populous is "contaminated with superstition," without reflecting on the preceding directive taken directly from Trent, which orders Catholics to desist from seeking holy intercession through an image or object. The next sentence reiterates the point, couching the command in the context of illicit, non-liturgical practice versus orthodox rite. "It is superstitious to expect any effect from anything, when such an effect cannot be produced by natural causes, by divine institutions, or *by the ordination and approval of the Church*."[6] The final qualifying statement was to prove enduring. Beginning with the *Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca*, 1612, and continuing through Gaetano Moroni Romano's *Dizionario di Erudizione Storico-Ecclesiastica*, 1855, superstition was defined as a transgression, a misguided belief in foolish things, "such as auguries, sorcery, and other things prohibited by the Church." In the *Vocabolario*, as in the decree from Malines, the key phrase—"proibite della Chiesa"—constituted a "perversion of religion."[7]

By reason of its place within the Malines document, the admonition acts as a pivotal point of nexus, at once referring reprovingly forward and backward. In the case of the latter, it reads as a reproaching postscript concerning the unorthodox use of images. In the case of the former, it functions as a foreword warning against lay appropriations

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[6] *Acta Conciliorum et epistolae decretales, ac constitutions summorum Pontificum*, 11 vols. (Paris: Typographia Regia, 1714), 10, col. 1954. As Michael D. Bailey, "Concern over Superstition in Late Medieval Europe," *Past and Present* (Supplement 3), (2008), p. 121, has noted, "the rapid growth of schools and universities" during the 13th and 14th centuries "led to a reinvigoration of theological discussions of the category of *superstitio*." The decrees from Malines still resonate with the foundational definition of superstition set-forth by Thomas Aquinas in *Summa theologica*, 2. 92. 2. The emphasis is mine.

[7] For the definition of "superstizione," see http://vocabolario.biblio.cribecu.sns.it. For history of superstition through the thirteenth century, see Dieter Harmening, *Superstitio: Überlieferungs- und theoriegeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur kirchlich-theologischen Aberglaubensliteratur des Mittelalters* (Berlin: E. Schmidt, 1979), esp. 33–42; and for a more general survey, Mary R. O'Neil, "Superstition," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 16 vols., ed. Mircea Eliade (New York: MacMillan, 1995), 14, pp. 163–66.

of the ecclesiastical ritual of exorcism. Establishing superstition as a connective link between the two goes beyond acknowledging that exorcism, no less than the excessive devotionalism that was endemic to cultic culture, had slipped beyond clerical control. As any number of sixteenth-century miracle books, or *libri dei miracoli*, and painted votive tablets, or *tavolette votive*, demonstrate, exorcism and the practices attending the invocation of saints for the sake of remedial assistance were closely connected. There was nothing new about this but the level of anxiety it fostered had become an issue. Although some theologians, like Bonaventure (*c.* 1217–74), recognized the uncomfortable closeness of miracles attributed to God's holy agents and happenings caused by unholy representatives of Satan, the use of spells, charms, and other folk-practices were not denounced uniformly as superstitious during the medieval era.[8] Concern was instead focused on heresy. Michael Bailey has explained the distinction between the two. "While heretics were sometimes labeled superstitious, heretical deviance was qualitatively different from supposed superstitions of earlier centuries. Even serious superstition might rest on mistaken practice as erroneous belief. Heresy, on the other hand, implied the deliberate denial of fundamental church doctrine."[9] By the beginning of the fifteenth century, however, perceptions were changing. Church authorities "no longer judged superstition as a matter of simple error; rather they saw in potentially superstitious practices a profound and dangerous deviance."[10] As Johannes Nider's (*c.* 1380–1430) *Formicarius*, Chancellor Jean Charlier de Gerson's (1363–1429) *De erroribus cica artem magicam*, Nicholas of Jauer's (*c.* 1335–1435) *Tractatus de supersticionibus*, and Martin of Arles' (1451?–1521) *Tractatus de superstitionibus* demonstrate, images were susceptible to misuse.

Martin of Arles, in fact, began his general discussion of superstition with just such an example. In a village near Pamplona where he was a canon, Martin witnessed processions and masses performed with and over an image of St. Peter. Following these ceremonies, officials submerged the statue in water believing that to do so would ensure

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[8] Bonaventure, *Commentaria in quatuor libros sententiarum*, in *Opera omnia*, 10 vols., P.P. Collegii S. Bonaventurae (Quaracchi, 1968), 4. 34. 2; Bernadette Filotas, *Pagan Survivals, Superstitions and Popular Cultures* (Toronto: Pontifical Institue of Medieval Studies, 2005); and Bailey, p. 119.

[9] Bailey, "Concern over Superstition," p. 120.

[10] Bailey, "Concern over Superstition," p. 120.

that rains would come and bring an end to the devastation caused by drought.[11] More than a century later and as is clearly conveyed by Cardinal Gabriele Paleotti's (1522–1597) *Discorso intorno alle immagini sacre e profane*, which was published in a Latin edition "to address a pan-European readership" in 1584, the difference between the sanctioned and superstitious use of images remained in need of clarification and practical enforcement.[12] For Paleotti, who asserted that efficacy inheres in an image only to the extent that it can cultivate piety (*coltivare la pietà*) and move the minds and spirits (*movere gli animi*) of beholders toward an adoration and love of God by reflecting "the prototypes [that is the historical Jesus, Mary, and saints] which they represent," images and image use had become fraught with problems.[13] He saw two root causes for these problems. *Errori* were incurred by artists too intent on demonstrating their artistic *virtù* while *abusi* were enacted by the *popoli*, especially *i poveri* and *gli idioti*, determined to find palliative relief from the travails of life when more orthodox methods, like traditional medicine, failed.[14]

A third cause can also be cited. Beginning in the twelfth century, the cult of Mary had been on the rise. In contrast to all other saints, Mary

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[11] Martin of Arles, *Tractatus de superstitionibus, contra maleficia seu sortilegia quae hodie vigent in orbe terrarum*, pp. 1r–2r in *Flagellum haereticorum fascinariorum: quae praeterea in hoc libro tradantur Index copiosus docebit* (Frankfurt am Main: Bassaeus, 1581). During the Renaissance, the Madonna of Impruneta was especially well known for providing similar relief from drought or, in the case of too much rain, halting downpours. See Richard C. Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), pp. 70–71.

[12] Gabriele Paleotti, *Discorso intorno alle immagini sacre e profane*, in *Trattati d'arte del cinquecento fra manierismo e controriforma*, 3 vols., ed. Paola Barocchi (Bari: Giuseppe Laterza & Figli, 1961), 2, pp. 282–285 (bk. 2, chap. 8, "Delle pitture superstiziose") and 2, pp. 197–201 (bk. 1, chap. 16, "Quali si chiamino imagini sacre"). Pamela M. Jones, "Art Theory as Ideology: Gabriele Paleotti's Hierarchial Notion of Painting's Universality and Reception," in *Reframing the Renaissance: Visual Culture in Europe and Latin America 1450–1650*, ed. Claire Farago (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 127 refers to the pan-European audience.

[13] Gabriele Paleotti, *Discorso intorno alle immagini sacre e profane*, in Barocchi, 2, pp. 214–16; and *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, pp. 215–16.

[14] As Kieckhefer persuasively argued, people resorted to these methods because they believed they worked. In other words, belief in their efficacy was "essentially rational." Richard Kieckhefer, "The Specific Rationality of Medieval Magic," *American Historical Review*, 99 (1994), pp. 813–36. References to the failure of physicians are omnipresent in miracle books. See, for example, Paolo Morigia, *Santuario della città e diocesi di Milano: nel qula si contiene il numero, e nome de tutti i corpi Santi, teste, e reliquie, che sono in tutte le chiesa della città* (Milan: G. Ferioli, 1602), p. 60. (Caterina from Parma was "disperata dell'aiuto de'medici).

had been bodily assumed into heaven. Accordingly, her life on earth was attested by only a very few material objects. Although Loreto had her Holy House, Prato preserved her girdle, Chartres laid claim to her shift, Laon had some strands of her hair, and drops of her sustaining milk were in a crystal jar at Walsingham, there was no body to be venerated.[15] Without a tomb or singular site of special status, her cult was able to spread without constraint. Moreover, and again in contrast to God's other holy agents, representations of her, whether painted, carved or modeled, assumed an affecting presence. The Madonna's willingness to act as "our advocate, our mediator, our queen, our bargainer," to use the words of Gerson, was incontestable.[16] Yet because perceptions of Mary's efficacy were not infrequently associated with representations of her, the perceived potential for errors in faith and image misuse worried authorities. That statues and pictures of Mary, in contrast to relics, were reported to acquire animism, speaking to passers-by, averting their gaze so as not to witness bad behavior, and descending from the walls on which they were painted to interact with a devotee, only served to heighten clerical concern.[17]

In the centuries following the Christianization of the Roman Empire, and with the legitimizing authority of Biblical precedent and the early Church Fathers, relics had been established as efficacious repositories of the sacred. At a saint's shrine spectators could witness any number of miraculous cures: sight restored to the blind, the sick returned to health, and the dead revived.[18] Yet of the many miracles attesting

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[15] Benedicta Ward, *Miracles and the Medieval Mind: Theory, Record and Event, 1000–1215* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1987), p. 136.

[16] Gerson as cited in Donna Spivey Ellington, *From Sacred Body to Angelic Soul: Understanding Mary in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 2001), p. 128. Approximately two centuries later, Morigia would describe her similarly in his book of miracles associated with the Madonna del Fonte di Caravaggio: "avvocata," "consolatrice de'tribulati," and "protettrice fedelissima." Morigia, *Santuario della città e diocesi di Milano*, p. 4.

[17] Any number of examples can be cited. I have selected the statue above the entrance to the Convent of San Bernardo on the island of Murano. In 1581, the statue purportedly spoke to a poor woman as she passed by. The claim was brought before the Holy Office of Venice for review in 1584 to determine whether it was based in fact or rooted in "occultic" beliefs. Flaminio Corner, *Ecclesiae Torcellanae antiquis monumentis nunc etiam primum editis illustrate*, (Venice: Baptiste Pasquali, 1749), pars secunda (tom. X.P.2) pp. 165–70. The document is published in Latin and the vernacular.

[18] II Kings 13:21; "And as a man was being buried, a marauding band was seen and the man was cast into the grave of Elisha; and as soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood on his feet."

God's willingness to, as Gregory of Tour (*c.* 538–594) put it, work through his saints and extend to humanity the right hand of his healing power (*medicabilis divinae potentiae dextera*), the most awesome was the liberation of the afflicted from the torments of diabolic possession.[19] According to Jerome (*c.* 347–420), the tomb of a prophet or holy martyr was where one heard "the noise of demons roaring in various torments." It was at these sacred sites that one could observe "men howling like wolves [and] barking like dogs" and see "women [hanging] upside down in mid-air."[20] (fig. 6.1) Such sights and sounds identified these hallowed places as "battlefields of the spirits," as the privileged locations where God, working through his chosen agents, wrestled with the devil "over their human quarry."[21]

Late medieval hagiographies such as the *Vita Prima* (*Assidua*) of St. Anthony and the subsequently penned life of the saint, *Legenda Rigaldina*, indicate the endurance of early Christian beliefs and practices.[22] Yet by the sixteenth century, a shift, which can be explained with reference to Michele de Montaigne's travel journal, was underway. In Rome during Holy Week, 1581, Montaigne witnessed an event not unlike the scene described by Jerome. In the presence of the Sudarium, which Montaigne describes as "a countenance wrought in needlework," a woman, "declared to be possessed, made a great uproar at the sight of the effigy, and began to screech and throw her arms

[19] Peter Brown, *The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982), p. 107. Also see Michael E. Goodich, *Miracles and Wonders: The Development of the Concept of Miracle, 1150–1350* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 23–24.

[20] Jerome as cited in Peter Brown, *The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 106.

[21] Brown, p. 107; and Nancy Caciola, *Discerning Spirits: Divine and Demonic Possession in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 227.

[22] The *Vita Prima* is dated *c.* 1300. The *Legenda Rigaldina* was written by Jean Rigauld, Franciscan bishop of Trégniers, d. 1323. Antonio Volpato, "Pubblicita del miracolo e certificazione delle testimonianze (secolo XIII–XIV)," in *Notai, Miracoli e Culto dei Santi: Pubblicita e Autenticazione del Sacro tra XII e XV Secolo*, ed. Raimondo Michetti (Milan: Dott. A Giuffrè, 2004), pp. 481–88. Also see, Patrizia Castelli, "Corpi Smembrati: Reliquie e Demoni," in *Taumaturgia e miracoli tra alto e basso Medioevo: prospettive metodologiche generali e casistiche locali: atti del Convegno di studio, Gubbio, 20–21 aprile 2007*, ed. Patrizia Castelli and Salvatore Geruzzi (Pisa and Rome: F. Serra, 2008), pp. 33–74; and more generally, Ottavio Franceschini, "L'esorcista," in *Medicina, erbe e magia (Cultura popolare nell'Emilia Romagna*), (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 1981), pp. 100–15.

Fig. 6.1 Bonaventura Berlinghieri, scene at the tomb of St. Francis, *St. Francis Altarpiece*, 1230s, Bardi Chapel, Santa Croce, Florence. Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.

about."[23] While Veronica's veil is without question a relic and indeed is cited specifically by Paleotti as a sacred object worthy of veneration, it is also unquestionably an image. The justifying grounds for honoring images of Mary, with the exception of those attributed to the hand of St. Luke were, as Paleotti stated, far less stable.[24] Still, the expansive growth of the Madonna's cult meant that the thaumaturgic miracles, including the purging of demons, that had once taken place exclusively in the hallowed precinct of a saint's final resting place were now enacted in proximity to or associated with a painting or a statue. This trend from agentic relic to efficacious image can be traced through a variety of works: prints that were produced in multiples for sale in the marketplace as well as singular, monumental altarpieces destined for churches.

The *Vanni Altarpiece*, *c.* 1420, which presents the life of St. Margaret of Antioch in eight episodic scenes, provides one such example. (figs. 6.2, 6.3) Although presently on view in the Vatican Museum, the gabled altarpiece probably stood originally in close proximity to the martyr's relics in the Cathedral of Montefiascone. The presence of Margaret's relics helps explain the final scene in the vita-retable: a referencing of the holy woman's post-mortem life, namely her capacity to perform miracles in death. Put another way, the afflicted assembled around her tomb, including at left a man plagued by a hovering demon, are a "visual confirmation of the efficacy of Margaret's *praesentia*," or divine presence.[25] The same may be said of Baccio Baldini's (d. 1487) engraving of St. Anthony Abbot. Like the *Vanni Altarpiece*, the final episodic vignette acknowledges the power of saintly presence by recording a thaumaturgic "life" in death.[26] Although the engraving by reason of

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[23] Michele de Montaigne, *The Journal of Montaigne's Travels in Italy: In Italy by Way of Switzerland and Germany in 1580 and 1581*, trans. William George Waters (London: John Murray, 1903), 2, pp. 150–51.

[24] For Lukan icons, see Michele Bacci, *Il pennello dell'Evangelista: storia delle immagini sacre attribute a San Luca* (Pisa: GISEM, Edizini ETS, 1998). For Lukan icons in Rome, see Gerhard Wolf, "Icons and sites: Cult images of the Virgin in Medieval Rome," in *Images of the Mother of God: Perceptions of the Theotokos in Byzantium*, ed. Maria Vassilaki (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 23–49.

[25] Leanne Kay Gilbertson, "Imaging St. Margaret: *Imitatio Christi* and *Imitatio Mariae* in the Vanni Altarpiece," in *Images, Relics, and Devotional Practices in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, eds. Sally J. Cornelison and Scott B. Montgomery (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006), pp. 135–37.

[26] The inscription, which begins "O holy father Anthony of Vienne," underscores the point. In the 11th century, Anthony's body was allegedly transferred from Constantinople to Vienne in southeast France.

Fig. 6.2 *Vanni Altarpiece*, *c*. 1420. Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.

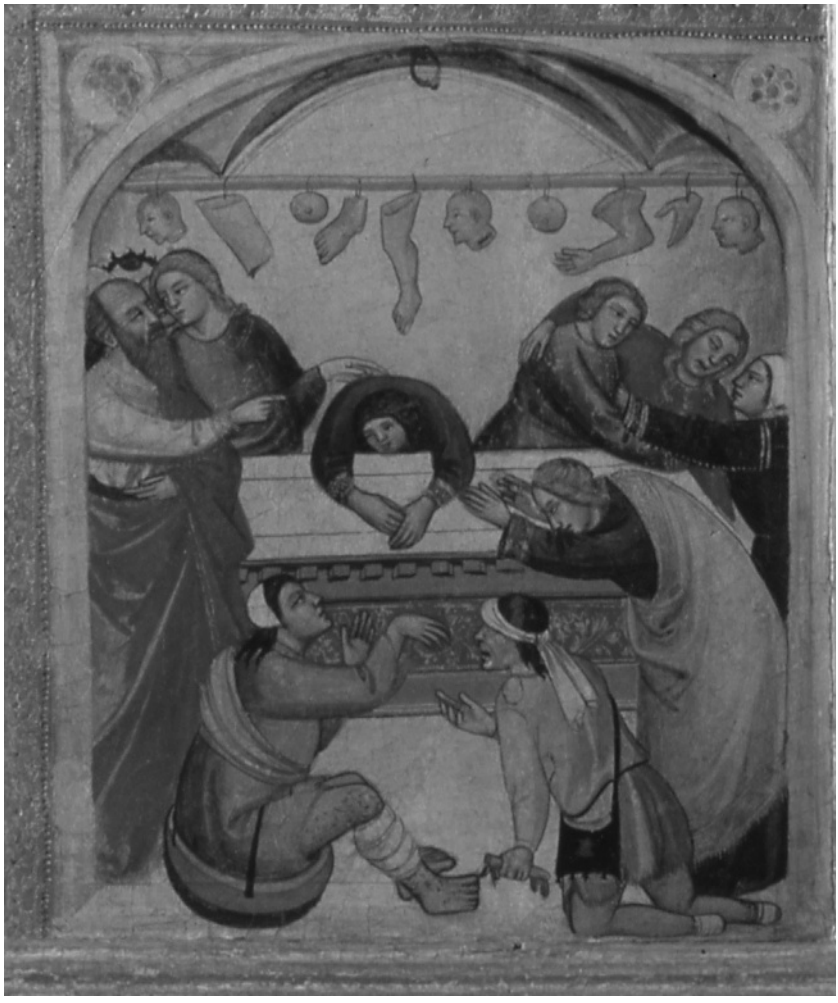

Fig. 6.3 Detail of pilgrims at the tomb of St. Margaret, *Vanni Altarpiece, c.* 1420. Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY.

its medium did not, like the *Vanni Altarpiece*, have a physical, connective link to relics, it nonetheless establishes one through the inscription that begins, "O holy father Anthony of Vienne." During the medieval period, Anthony's body was reportedly brought from Constantinople to Vienne in southern France. Anyone desiring the Abbot's intercession in overcoming any of the ills pictured in Baldini's engraving understood that Vienne was where the saint's *praesentia* was most powerful. A votive panel dedicated in the early sixteenth century to the Madonna di Loreto and the Madonna del Monte of Cesena by Zuan of Milan is but one of a number of examples pointing to a broadening of agentic sources.[27] (fig. 6.4) *Praesentia* was no longer accessed solely through the detritus of the dead. The manifestations of the Madonna invoked by Zuan were associated with, in the first instance, the Holy House of Nazareth and the small wooden statue of Mary within it and, in the second case, with a polychrome statue of the Virgin that had stood in a shrine along a popular pilgrimage route. (fig. 6.5)

It is notable that the decades bracketed by the approximate dates of the *Vanni Altarpiece* and the Bandini engraving, circa 1400–1460s, coincide roughly with two other occurrences. The first is, as noted, the continued and steady rise in the number of Marian image cults. The second has been described as a "precipitous drop" in the documented number of exorcisms performed at saints' shrines. Nancy Caciola explained the latter development in terms of a shift. While documented cases of exorcisms at gravesites fell, the ritual gained a more "striking visibility" in other types of documents. She notes one. For centuries exorcism had been "an improvised public spectacle at a saint's tomb." Now with the production of large numbers of portable, pocket-sized manuals exorcism began to transform into what she and others characterize as a scripted "liturgical performance" enacted in churches.[28] The process of conversion continued throughout the sixteenth century and into the seventeenth with the publication of tomes filled with instructional detail. One year after the Council of Malines deliberated over the practice, the conversion was arguably complete. In 1608, the *Thesaurus exorcismorum* was published. Totaling 1,272

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[27] Franco Faranda, "*Fides tua te salvum fecit*": *I Dipinti Votivi nel Santuario di Santa Maria del Monte a Cesena* (Modena: Artioli, 1997), pp. 185–86, cat. no. 122.

[28] Caciola, *Discerning Spirits*, p. 236, who cites André Goddu's graph plotting the number of exorcisms in the *Acta Sanctorum* for the month of October from the 10th through 15th centuries.

Fig. 6.4 Votive tablet donated by Zuan of Milan, *c.* 1500–1510, *c.* 33.5 × 22, Sanctuary of the Madonna del Monte, Cesena. Photo: author.

Fig. 6.5 *The Madonna del Cesena*. Photo: author.

pages and comprising influential texts by Girolamo Menghi, Valerio Polidori, Zacharia Visconti, and Pietro Antonio Stampa, the *Thesaurus* was quite literally weighted with authority.

Regularizing the rite through instructional manuals was not, however, the only change taking place. As stated, Marian image cults, which began to increase in the twelfth century, were garnering an ever-growing number of devotees. Unique to Mary was a near total absence of relics. There were, to be sure, some remnant proofs of her terrestrial existence, but because the canonical Gospels of Mary do not mention her death and burial, there was no designated tomb where her efficacious presence affected miraculous healings, no unique place where men could be heard to howl like wolves, and no singular site where women could be seen suspended upside down in mid-air as the Queen of Heaven engaged the demonic in combat. This is not to say that the cult of saints fell by the wayside. They continued to thrive and as nearly ten extant *tavolette votive* donated to San Nicola of Tolentino indicate, their intercession assisted in the expulsion of demons plaguing the possessed. (fig. 6.6) Still, the numbers cannot be ignored.

By 1550, the Italian landscape was populated by hundreds of Marian sanctuaries. The province of Bresciano, for example, had close to 120 such sites on the eve of the final meeting of the Council of Trent. That number would continue to grow through the mid-seventeenth century.[29] Given the scarcity of Marian relics, sanctity—and, hence, holy *praesentia*—could not be invested in a jawbone, a scapula, or a femur. Instead, it was signified by and through images. Some, like Naples' Madonna di Costantinopoli, were associated with icons celebrated as having been painted by St. Luke, others, like Bologna's Madonna del Soccorso, were found buried in rubble at a city's margins or, as is the case of the Madonna della Quercia in Viterbo, a rudely rendered picture tied in the limbs of a tree. Still others, such as the Madonna of Tirano north of Brescia, were made to give material substance to one of Mary's many visionary appearances, while others, like the Madonna delle Carceri in Prato, were long forgotten representations of the Holy Mother that had suddenly acquired an animated presence.[30]

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[29] Angelo Turchini, ed., *Lo straordinario e il quotidiano, Ex voto, santuario, religione populare nel Bresciano* (Brescia: Grafo, 1980), carta 1.

[30] The Madonna di Costantinopoli, Naples, of the *Hodegetria* type, was reportedly painted by St. Luke then sent to Jerusalem by Empress Eudocia. One of the most venerated icons, the *Hodegetria* was carried along the walls of Constantinople, saving

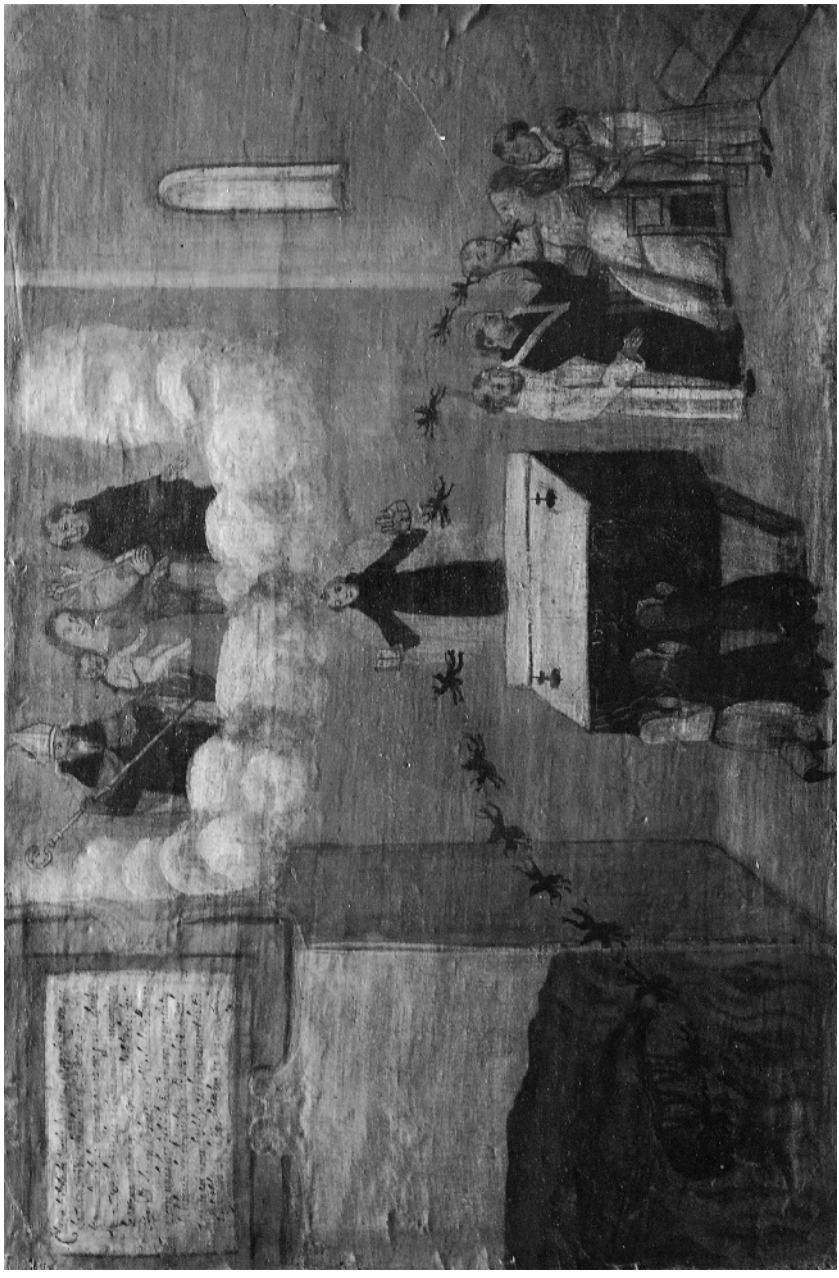

Fig. 6.6 Votive tablet donated by the family of Chiara da Camerino, 1589, cm. 59 × 41.5, Sanctuary of San Nicola of Tolentino. Photo: author.

Regardless of their materiality, these representations were at the center of rituals that fell, often uncomfortably, under the rubric of *medicine ecclesiastiche*.

The history of the Sanctuary of the Madonna del Monte located just above Cesena in Emilia-Romagna illustrates the trend in popular devotionalism from a concentrated focus on relics to one more clearly centered around images. In the early eleventh century, a shrine was built to mark the sacred hilltop tomb of Cesena's revered and subsequently canonized archbishop, San Mauro. As pilgrims ascended the long stairway leading to this holy place they passed a modest *aedicula* protecting a statue of the Virgin Mary. Increasingly, pilgrims made the polychrome statue rather than the relics of the saintly San Mauro their principal point of destination. Responding in 1318 to this change in pilgrims' focus, the bishop ordered the statue transferred to the reliquary shrine. Two hundred years later, the transference became a transformation. Between 1507 and 1572, Mauro's unassuming shrine was expanded into a monumental basilica dedicated to the Madonna del Monte, its size and design intended to accommodate Mary's many

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the city from Arab invasion in 717. Although the original icon was in all likelihood destroyed in 1453, various Italian cities laid claim to having it. For a history of the Neapolitan site, see Michele Giustiniani, *Dell'origine della Madonna di Costantinopoli, o sia d'Itria e delle di lei traslationi* (Rome, Rev. Cam. Apostolica, 1656). The story behind Bologna's Madonna del Soccorso is a fascinating one involving two men eager to reap the rewards that accompany the founding of a confraternity. In fact, it is a story of testing several Marian representations for efficacy. See Nicholas Terpstra, *Lay Confraternities and Civic Religion in Renaissance Bologna* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 209–10; for the Madonna of Tirano, see Saveria Masa, *Il "Libro dei Miracoli" della Madonna di Tirano* (Sondrio: Società storica Valtellinese, 2004), which includes a history of the site as well as a transcription of its miracle book. The first miracle, pp. 54–56, recounts the Madonna's miraculous appearance. The Madonna delle Carceri, painted over a barred window of an abandoned prison, reportedly detached herself from the wall and descended to tidy the area in July 1484. See Paul Davies, "The Early History of S. Maria delle Carceri in Prato," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 54 (1995), pp. 326–335. Robert Maniura's in-depth studies of the shrine's miracle books should also be consulted, esp. "Image and Relic in the Cult of Our Lady of Prato," in *Images, Relics, and Devotional Practices in Medieval and Renaissance Italy*, eds. Sally J. Cornelison and Scott B. Montgomery (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2005), pp. 193–212. While the Madonna del Soccorso is distinctive by reason of it being the fourth in a series of tried representations, all of the origins of these miracles-working Madonnas adhere to established *topoi*. This is readily apparent by even a cursory glance at the more than 1,200 Marian shrines included in Wilhelm Gumppenberg's *Atlas Marianus: quo santae Dei genetricis Maria imaginum miraculosarum origins duodecim historiarum centurijs explicantur*, 4 vols. (Ingolstadt: Georgii Haenlini, 1657); and more recently *I Mille Santuari Mariani d'Italia Illustrati* (Rome: Assoc. Santuari Mariani, 1960).

devotees as well as the votive offerings left behind, including votive tablets like the one left on site by Zuan of Milan following his release from the clutches of demonic forces.[31] (fig. 6.7)

There is no indication that the devotional activities around Cesena's Madonna del Monte were perceived by Church authorities as being "contaminated with superstition," but in Bresciano, or to be more specific, the 90 km long Val Camonica that extends from Iseo to the Alpine pass of Tonale, similar behaviors around like representations were viewed with wariness. The Val Camonica was home to nearly 30 of the 120 Marian sanctuaries in the province. It was also, according to a literate resident writing in 1518, "a place of mountains…inhabited by a people who are largely ignorant, goitrous…and lacking all the finer points of civil society."[32] It was here, about mid-way between Sondrio and Edolo, where Mariolo de Homodeo met the Virgin as he entered a small wood on the outskirts of Tirano on September 29, 1504, and, pursuant to her request and in recognition of her instrumental role in releasing Tirano from the plague, began immediately to construct a church in her honor. Additionally a sculptor was found to give material and commemorative substance to the apparition. Over the course of the next fifteen years, the Madonna of Tirano performed no less than 73 miracles, among them the purging of demons from a woman described in the shrine's *libro dei miracoli* as German, ignorant, and possessed.[33]

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[31] For a brief history of the site, see L. Novelli and L. D'Elia, *Abbazia S. Maria del Monte* (Cesena, 1999). A series of 14 frescoes completed in 1559 by Girolamo Longhi and wrapping around the central nave relate the life of the Virgin.

[32] For a more complete excerpt of the description, which appears in a letter from one Giuseppe da Orzinuovi to Ludovico Querini dated August 1, 1518, included in Marino Sanudo's *I Diarii*, see Stephen Bowd, "Honeyed Flies' and 'Sugared Rats': Witchcraft, Heresy, and Superstition in the Bresciano, 1454–1535," *Past and Present* (2008), Supplement 3, p. 136.

[33] The Virgin's appearance counts as the first miracle. It is followed by 73 more, the final entry in Tirano's *libro dei miracoli* being dated August 1, 1519. Masa, *Il "Libro dei Miracolia*," includes the miracle book text in its original form as well as in modern Italian translation. The exorcism of Andriosen's wife is miracle no. 8, p. 64. It is one of two exorcisms noted in the miracle book, the other being no. 4, p. 60. In this case however the sufferer is characterized as "demenzia e pazzia" rather than the more specific *indemoniata*. Construction on the sanctuary began on March 25, 1505. The church was consecrated in 1528. Luke 13: 11–13, which recounts the miracle of Jesus restoring mobility to a crippled woman, suggests that the shackles constraining Andriosen's wife might have performed a symbolic as well as practical function. The gospel describes the afflicted woman as "bound by Satan."

Fig. 6.7 Interior, Sanctuary of the Madonna del Monte, Cesena. Photo: author.

Exactly how the exorcism was performed at Tirano cannot be established given the scant information contained in the shrine's *libro dei miracoli*. All we are told is that the ritual lasted three hours, included a mass, and the recitation of the popular prayer "O Intermerata." However, miracle books and *tavolette votive* from other shrines suggest that by the latter part of the sixteenth century exorcisms were frequently carried out at Marian sanctuaries and followed prescribed dictates, including performing the ritual within clear sight of a holy image. Paolo Morigia's *libro dei miracoli* celebrating the Madonna del Fonte at Caravaggio, for example, cites ten including the daughter of Giovanni Antonio del Corva, whose cure was affected "dinanzi all Madonna," namely in the *praesentia* of her image, in the Chapel of the Apparition.[34] Morigia, like the authors of similar texts, is not always so specific. Depictions of exorcisms, however, such as those included in Fra Raimondo Ciucci's "Bellisimo Miracolo di Maria SS. Della Quercia," 1686, a manuscript that reproduces hundreds of votive panels that used to cover the walls of the Viterban sanctuary, and Giovanni Angelo Lottini's *Scelta d'alcuni miracoli, e grazie della Santissima Nunziata di Firenze*, 1619, a visual anthology of miracles associated with a painting of the Annunciation brought to miraculous finish through angelic intervention, suggest a relationship between intercessory *praesentia* and a sacred image. (fig. 6.8) Still, it can be argued that on the most basic level references to exorcisms at Marian shrines, whether verbal or visual, do no more than signal that the event took place on consecrated ground. In the context of exorcism nothing definitive is disclosed concerning image efficacy. If, however, the discussion is expanded beyond the perceived role of sacred representations in affecting this type of cure to the ways in which images of the devil were utilized in the process of purgation, then we gain a better perspective on Renaissance perceptions of efficacy.

Exorcism is typically characterized as a verbal encounter between the exorcist and the devil, a "scripted" dialogue defined by a "distinctly narrative structure." Antonio Maggi described it as "first and foremost a dialogic performance involving two idioms and two names, God's

[34] Paolo Morigia, *Santuario della città e diocesi di Milano, nel qual si contiene il numero, e nome de tutti i corpi Santi, teste, e reliquie, che sono in tutte le chiesa della città* (Milan: Antonio degli Antonij, 1603) p. 34.

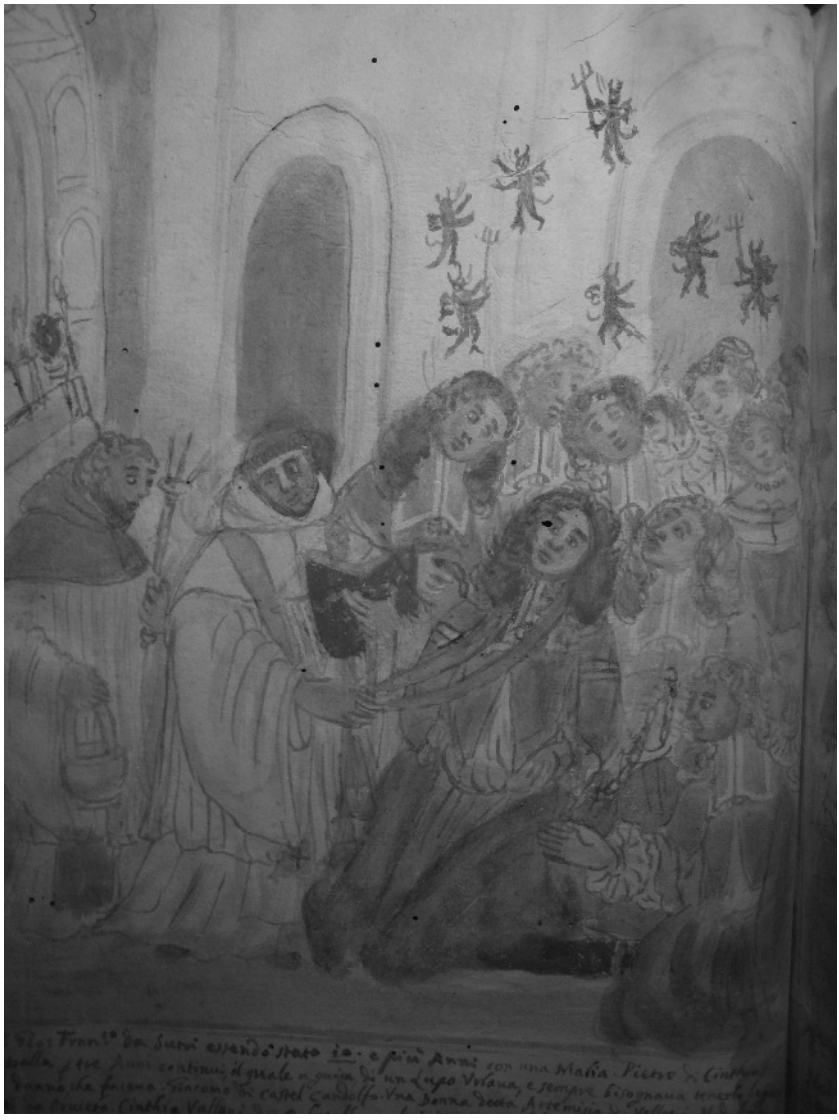

Fig. 6.8 Fra Raimondi Ciucci, "Bellissimo Miracolo di Maria SS. Della Quercia," Besso 4a.E.2., 1686, Biblioteca Besso, Rome. Photo: author.

and the devil's."[35] This cannot be questioned. In order for the former to engage the latter in battle both must be present.[36] Because demonic spirits tend to hide within the body of the possessed it is the task of the exorcist to literally call them forth. To assist in this endeavor, exorcism manuals contain protracted lists of names to which Satan might respond. They also provide a litany of names for God and his agents, for it is with the assistance of the Lord's holy assistants that the exorcist attacks the enemy. Yet this is not the only way to summon Satan. An image, specifically an image of the devil himself, can be equally effective. Both Girolamo Menghi and Zacharia Visconti provide instructions on how it is to be used. The exorcist is directed to draw or paint the devil's image on a sheet of paper that is then labeled. In *Flagellum daemonum*, which Menghi dedicated to Gabriele Paleotti in 1578, the relationship between the image and the devil, who is otherwise visible only in the signs of torment exhibited by the possessed, is addressed.[37] "The image now correspond[s] to the figure and name of this most disgraceful spirit."[38] At this point in the procedure, Visconti recommends tormenting the evil force by cursing at, spitting on, and stomping upon the image. Both authors agree on what comes next. The paper bearing the representation is burned. Again, Menghi explains. "As you will then burn and inflame this image…so must the spirit who improperly is found in the body of this person feel in itself and in all its substance the power of fire till the day of judgment."[39]

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[35] Antonio Maggi, *Satan's Rhetoric: A Study of Renaissance Demonology* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2001), p. 116.

[36] This belief was notoriously confirmed by Werner of Freiburg, who claimed the phrase "verbum caro factum est" would force the devil into retreat. See Robert E. Lerner, "Werner of Freiburg intrappolato dalla legge," in *La parola all'accusato*, eds. Jean-Claude Marie Vigeur and Agostino Paravicini Bagliani (Palermo: Sellerio, 1991), p. 280.

[37] "While in the Middle Ages, and especially following St. Thomas, the terms *possessio* and *obsessio* appear interchangeably in records of exorcism, the two words describe different forms of diabolic attacks, and the differences between them were articulated in manuals for exorcists in the early modern period. In possession, penetrate the body (but not the soul) of the possessed, and operate within it on the soul.… In obsession, on the other hand, evil spirits torment the body from outside." Moshe Sluhovsky, "The Devil in the Convent," *American Historical Review*, 107 (2000), p. 1406.

[38] Girolamo Menghi, "Exorcism of Fire," in *Flegellum daemonum* [1576], in *The Devil's Scourge: Exorcism During the Italian Renaissance*, trans. and commentary Gaetano Paxia (Boston: Weiser Books, 2002), p. 149.

[39] Menghi, *The Devil's Scourge*, p. 149.

These, it seems, were practiced instructions. They were also directives open to charges of superstition and spurious actions. Citing the case of Sara Williams in the Catholic *Booke of Miracles*, Samuel Harsnett, a vocal skeptic of reports of diabolical possession, used the burning of the devil's effigy as a pitiable example of the common man's susceptibility to fakery, of humanity's general willing acceptance as truth of what is obviously a staged lie. Confronted by the devil's refusal to disclose his name, the exorcist, said Harsnett, resorts to drawing an effigy of the demon "upon a peece of paper, the picture of a vice in a play, and the same to be burned with hallowed brimstone, whereat the devil cryed out at being grievously tormented."[40] As Harsnett's diatribe suggests, destroying the devil's image was seen by many to be of critical importance. In fact, the perception was by this date centuries old.

Following imprisonment, torture, and finally a trial, a group of alleged heretics was brought before the citizenry of Arras for public sentencing and execution in 1460. Assembled on a makeshift stage, the accused presented quite a spectacle. While in prison, the accused had been ordered to make a paper miter on which they were to paint or draw a person, clearly intended to be self-referential, kneeling before the devil.[41] The so-called heretics appeared before the Arrageois wearing their *mitrés.* Found guilty as charged, the condemned, wearing their miters, were burned at the stake. All but one of those charged died in the flames. Having failed to complete the making of her devil-emblazoned miter Belotte Mouchard remained in prison for to burn her without it would have been but a half measure. It would have been an act that rid the world of an agent of evil yet allowed Satan to remain unscathed. As fate would have it, Belotte Mouchard was later exonerated. An image, or rather its absence, saved her life. The incident resonates with the writings of Nicholas of Jauer, Jean Gerson, and even Gabriele Paleotti. People cannot compel the devil to something through the use of charms, spells, figurations, or words. However,

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[40] Harsnett, *A Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures* [1603] as cited in Stephen Greenblatt, "Loudun and London," *Critical Inquiry*, 12 (1986), p. 339.

[41] *Mémoires de Jacques du Clercq*, in *Collection des chroniques nationales francaise…avec notes et éclaircissements*, ed. Frédéric-Auguste-Ferdinand-Thomas Reiffenberg (Paris: J.A. Buchon, 1826–27), 39, pp. 18–19. "…d'une mitre ou estoit peinct la figure du Diable en telle maniere qu'ils avoient confessé lui avoir fait hommaige; et eux à genoux, peicts devant le Diable." I am indebted to Jessica Roussanov who so generously brought this site to my attention.

human acts of devotion can predispose Satan to act on an individual's behalf.

While the procedures for exorcism prescribed by Menghi and Visconti were authorized by the Church, they, or more accurately the defined relationship between sign and signified that they acknowledge, raise uneasy questions. It is but a small step to move from the correspondence between Satan and image noted by Menghi and vividly demonstrated by the case of Belotte Mouchard to one between a cultic image of the Madonna and the archetype to which it refers. Indeed, there is no dearth of sources that imply an equation of likeness exceeding visual similitude. *Libri dei miracoli* are full of miraculous signs of equivalency suggesting that the Virgin is a living presence within her image. The face of the Madonna dell'Arco, for example, still exhibits the bruise it reportedly sustained when a ball was thrown at the picture in anger while the Madonna dei Miracoli at Lonigo still cradles her cheek, which, it is said, was stabbed by a passing brigand. (fig. 6.9) Such signs of injury clearly deny the material substance of a man-made representation and his raises an obvious question. If Menghi's devil suffers torments as its image burns, then what does the Virgin feel when her image experiences a blow from a rock or knife? At this juncture it seems wise to heed Peter Parshall's warning and advice. "Any attempt to reconstruct the visual experience of devotion before an image, even within the vaguest of parameters, is notoriously vexed. At best one can try to establish certain conventional boundaries of expectation."[42] It is with this in mind that we can constructively consider the practice recorded in the *libro dei miracoli* of the Madonna dell'Arco of dusting the Virgin's image.

Compiled in 1608, the miracle book of the Madonna dell'Arco, which is located nine km east of Naples, recounts an impressive array of miraculous cures and wondrous events surrounding the fragment of a wall bearing an image of the Madonna and Christ Child. Several instances of both purging demons and warding off the devil are noted. As recorded by the sanctuary's Dominican prior, they seem uncomfortably close to the "contamination" that the Council of Malines had addressed the previous year. Devotees of the Madonna often carried a *bambace*, or piece of cotton wadding, which they used to collect dust from the painting. The dust-laden wadding was then burned, the

[42] Peter Parshall, "The Art of Memory and the Passion," *Art Bulletin* 81 (1999), p. 464.

Fig. 6.9 Detail, *Madonna dell'Arco*, Sanctuary of the Madonna dell'Arco, Sant'Anastasia (NA). Photo: author.

ashes stirred into holy water, and the mixture ingested for its "*effetti mirabilis*" against "malignant spirits, witches, illness and [evil] things." The procedure, which was also performed in Lucca, had value beyond its talismanic efficacy. According to Fra Arcangelo Domenici, Marian image dust forced Satan into retreat on two separate occasions.[43]

So, what are we dealing with here? Superstition, symbol, or is something else in play? If we assume the point of view expressed by Erasmus in *Exorcismus, sive spectrum*, 1524, then the answer is the ignorance of the unlettered, the corruption of the clergy, and all of the superstition that attends both. Not only does Erasmus mockingly attribute the effectiveness of an exorcism to "the bowels of the Blessed Mary [and] the bones of Blessed Winifred" he comments on the misguided faith in "a waxen image of the kind blessed by the pope and known as an Agnus Dei…[that many maintain can] protect them against harmful demons."[44] If, instead, we turn to the effigies of the devil topping the heap of books, cosmetics, clothing, and other objects of self-indulgence and excess burned as vanities during carnival, then we must conclude that images functioned in a more symbolic manner.[45] In such instances of image burnings—and not to be confused with the devil emblazoned miters worn by those convicted of heresy—efficacy and the contamination of superstition were not an issue during the topsy-turvy times of carnival. *Tavolette votive* suggest a third possibility.

Today, at sites scattered throughout the Italian peninsula, there are approximately 1,500 votive panel pictures that can be dated from the middle decades of the fifteenth century to the first decade of the seventeenth. Left at consecrated sites in fulfillment of a vow to a holy intercessor, these panels illustrate the trials of lived experience by visually recording the dangers and suffering that accompany everything from the discomforts of gout and the perils of pregnancy to the devastations

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[43] The manuscript, which includes the site's two foundational miracles, an array of subsequent wondrous events, and the early history of the structure and its attendant monastery, is dated February 20, 1608. Fra Arcangelo Domenici, *Compendio dell'historia, miracoli e gratie*, in *Le origini della Madonna dell'Arco: Il "Compendio dell'historia, miracoli e gratie" di Arcangelo Domenici (1608), Introduzione, testo, note e illustrazioni*, ed. Michele Miele (Naples-Bari: Domenicana Italiana, 1995), pp. 136–137. For another early history of the sanctuary, see Fr. Ludovico Ayrola, *L'Arco celeste, Trionfo di Maria dell'Arco* (Naples: Michele Monaco, 1688). The Sanctuary remains an active one.

[44] Erasmus of Rotterdam, *The Colloquies of Erasmus*, trans. Craig R. Thompson (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1965), p. 233.

[45] Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*, p. 122.

of war and plague. Among the painted scenes of children escaping a house engulfed in flames, bandits attacking travelers, men falling from ladders and rooftops, and the accused suffering the physical agonies of interrogation by rope hoist, are depictions of exorcisms. The latter group of votive pictures, which in essence situate one form of *medicine ecclesiastiche* (exorcism) within another (pilgrimage and votive donation), has a feature that sets them apart. In contrast to other *tavolette*, images of exorcism almost always, especially after Trent, include members of the clergy. (fig. 6.10) Moreover they do so in ways that typically illustrate unequivocally an adherence to procedures detailed in official treatises on the ritual in the corpus of texts included in the *Thesaurus exorcismorum*. The possessed individual, for example, is almost always pictured draped with the *stola*, a sash used to capture the devil, while the priest, usually holding a book suggesting his adherence to sanctioned directives and a candle, which was used to signal Satan's flight, concentrates on the task at hand. With few exceptions, the administering of extreme unction being the principal one, *tavolette* donated after a successful exorcism are distinguished by this clerical presence. This must be placed in context. *Tavolette* identify their donors by the specificity of the pictured event, by portraying the donor experiencing the incident, and sometimes through descriptive inscriptions that supply a name and date. They were also very public objects by reason of the rituals attending donation and by right of their placement within sacred spaces. Nailed to a sanctuary's walls or propped against an altar, they functioned as public testimonies of faith. Any deviation from approved practices would therefore have been clearly visible to all, including authorities who, in the decades immediately preceding and following the final session of the Council of Trent, were intent on rooting out agents of *maleficium* and instituting policies aimed at regaining control over popular devotional practices, including *medicine ecclesiastiche*.[46] I suggest that *tavolette* stand in counterpoint to accounts of ingesting dust gathered from a sacred image. The latter practice smacks of superstition. The former documents adherence to orthodox rule by both the donors and the officiating priests who, in the latter half of the sixteenth century, had to be approved by episcopal authorities. In other words, these images protected the participants from charges of error.

[46] O'Neil, "*Sacerdote ovvero strione*," p. 65.

Fig. 6.10 Votive panel depicting an exorcism, late 16th cent., cm 20.5 × 30.5, Sanctuary of the Madonna dei Miracoli, Lonigo. Photo: author.

As noted, we should heed Peter Parshall's warning that "any attempt to reconstruct the visual experience of devotion before an image… is notoriously vexed." We can do no more than attempt to define "conventional boundaries of expectation," no more than intuit what people living centuries before our own may have felt and thought.[47] Yet while "we cannot share the intuitions in which [the] knowledge [of an earlier era] was grounded," we can, as Richard Kieckhefer has argued, "come to know what they claimed to know."[48] What the devotional practices of the early modern period suggest is that our view of art and agency should be expanded to accommodate their understanding of the relationship of efficacy and images. There are, as Robert Plant Armstrong explained, two ways of evaluating the affecting presence of images and objects. The first reflects an appreciation "for how it looks," an

[47] Parshall, "The Art of Memory and the Passion," p. 464.
[48] Kieckhefer, "The Specific Rationality of Medieval Magic," p. 832.

admiration of technical excellence manifesting a creativity in a work's conception. The second way of evaluating a work shifts the focus from traditional artistic values to its practical usage. It is based upon "what it [the image] does" when it is incorporated into and vivified by ritual.[49] Albeit in decidedly different ways, both systems of evaluation participate in and reflect the values, beliefs, and ideologies of the culture in which they existed, pointing to the ways people and the objects and images they made and used colluded to establish meaning.

[49] Robert Plant Armstrong, *The Powers of Presence* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), pp. 10–11.

PART III

REVEALING AND CONCEALING

7. EVERYBODY'S DARLING. TRANSFORMATION OF VALUE AND TRANSFORMATION OF MEANING IN THE VENERATION OF ST. ELIZABETH OF THURINGIA

Viola Belghaus

Although Elizabeth of Thuringia was most popular for her extraordinary piety in service of the poor and sick, a brief overview of her pictorial representation shows a broad variety of iconographic patterns. Surprisingly, during the medieval and early modern period her life was remodeled into different and contradictory interpretations as saint of poverty as well as a saint of nobility; she was not only admired in hospitals and nunneries, she eventually became a patron saint of the Thuringian landgraves and an ideal figure of social welfare in the Hassian territories. To understand these various modes of veneration, this essay will survey the cult of St. Elizabeth at her tomb in Marburg, in order to demonstrate how the specific constitution of the early cult, its promotion as a pilgrimage site and its transformation into an important center of the Teutonic Order, influenced the reception of the saint during the late Middle Ages. For this purpose, in my view, two aspects are crucial for the medieval shaping of the cult: first, the concept of medieval treasury, linked with relics as sacred objects, and second, the underlying concept of value, for sanctity is always characterized by an exemplary conduct of life, forming the attributed qualities of the saint.

The first two sections will examine the medieval perception of relics regarding their material and spiritual value. Despite the material contrast of the relics themselves and the precious reliquaries designed to host and present them, a contrast frequently emphasized by medieval theologians with the coupled terms of "gold and ashes," the holy substance of the relic had a value of its own, for these earthly remains of saints guaranteed immediate access to the divine. Referring both to the earthly and heavenly presence of the saint, relic veneration can be described as an actual encounter of the sacred and the faithful. More generally seen within the anthropological frame of sacred objects, they cannot be limited to religious functions. Instead, they contained spiritual as well as economic and symbolic meanings, for they were

collected, exchanged to establish social relations, and promoted to enhance the significance and economic power of a community. By linking medieval relic collections to the concept of treasury, it will be argued that their meaning contained a twofold function: as intrinsically valuable material within the church treasure and as a metaphor for the immaterial treasure of grace.

Having outlined these aspects on medieval relic piety, the following sections will examine the exemplary analysis of St. Elizabeth's veneration. Of utmost interest in the case of Elizabeth is the particular context during the first years of the cult, which clearly demonstrate how the fabrication of the new saint depended both on the preservation of her relics, herein understood as treasury formation, and the development of an iconography, which constituted specific values commanding the reception of the saint. The different phases of the veneration of St. Elizabeth reveal steady alterations, depending on changing personal and institutional contexts and their modified use of the relics. During the canonization process, Elizabeth's corpse was transformed into a sacred body to encourage pilgrimage and prove her sanctity. After her canonization these relics became an economic factor during the campaign to construct a new church, ultimately gaining symbolic meaning for her former relatives and heirs within dynastic legitimization and political conflicts. Eventually, during Reformation the relics lost their sacredness and, extinguished of their spiritual value, were retransformed into the bones of a dead person. These steady revaluations influenced the devotional setting for pilgrimage, for they affected the presentation of the relics and the imagery developed to promote the model of Elizabeth's sainthood. Once veneration was underpinned with political and dynastic motivations restricted access to the relics within the pilgrimage church can be observed.

Devotional interaction, herein understood as communication, which enabled social relations between the saints and the faithful, is not a single matter of worshipping audiences seeking cures and salvation during pilgrimage. In order to understand the social role of saints, their veneration can also be clarified by the producers and "directors" of the cult, for sanctity never exists for its own sake, rather it is a matter of attribution, which has to be approved, fabricated, and promoted. While art-historical research is mostly focused on the pictorial representation of saints, it is noteworthy that in medieval practice devotional interaction was primarily related to the relic itself. Medieval

image theory always stressed that the beholder's gaze should not be distracted by the splendor and the skillfulness of art, but should focus on the divinity beyond the image. Similar arguments regarding the material contrast of relic and reliquary emerged in theological discussions on relic veneration. Despite these arguments and various attempts to explain the material worth of reliquaries as an embellishment of the divine, the holy substance and the precious artifact were interwoven into a multi-layered system which conveyed spiritual, symbolic and economic power, defining both the value and the significance of a saint.

Sacred Remains: Bones and Stones

Around the mid-2nd century, the parish of Smyrna wrote a letter to a friendly parish in Phrygia, informing them of the fate of their bishop, Polykarp.[1] The authors of this oldest reported martyrdom described how Polykarp, after being betrayed by a young slave, steadily refused to renounce his Christian faith and finally was tied a stake to be burned alive. Since the fire could not harm his body, but rather surrounded him as a veil—a phenomenon the authors compared with the metaphor of a melting furnace, purifying gold and silver—the proconsul commanded the executioner to kill the bishop with a dagger. Afterwards

[1] *Martyrium des Polykarp* in ed. and trans. Andreas Lindemann and Henning Paulsen, *Die Apostolischen Väter*, Griechisch-deutsche Parallelausgabe auf der Grundlage der Ausgaben von Franz Xaver Funk, Karl Bihlmeyer und Molly Whittaker (Tübingen: Mohr, 1992), pp. 258–85. The analogy of relics and stones influenced pious dicourse during the entire Middle Ages. Other examples can be seen in Petrus Venerabilis (1094–1156), who in a sermon delineated a comparison of relics and pearls and Thiofrid of Echternach (1081–1110), who wrote an influential treatise on relics qualifying the material contrast of gold and ashes as an accidental not a substantial difference, Petrus Venerabilis, "Sermo IV: In veneratione quarumlibet reliquarium" in ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, *Patrologiae cursus completus, series latina* (Paris: Garnier, 1844–1903), 189, pp. 999D–1000A, Thiofridus Epternacensis, *Flores epytaphii sanctorum*, ed. Michele C. Ferrari (Turnhout: Brepols, 1996) II 2, p. 34. See also Gia Toussaint, "Heiliges Gebein und edler Stein. Der Edelsteinschmuck von Reliquiaren im Spiegel mittelalterlicher Wahrnehmung," *Das Mittelalter* 8 (2003), pp. 41–66, p. 51; Michele C. Ferrari, "Gold und Asche. Reliquie und Reliquiare als Medien in Thiofrid von Echternachs Flores epytaphii sanctorum" in ed. Bruno Reudenbach and Gia Toussaint, *Reliquiare im Mittelalter* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005), pp. 61–74; Brigitte Buettner, "From Bones to Stones—Reflections on Jeweled Reliquaries" in ed. Bruno Reudenbach and Gia Toussaint, *Reliquiare im Mittelalter* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005), pp. 43–59.

the parish members wished to bury the corpse near their church, but it was not released by the Roman rulers until it was burnt. Only then were the parishioners allowed to gather and bury the remains: "So we received later his bones, which were nobler than stones and more precious than gold, and buried them at an appropriate place."[2]

Within this ancient account all the principles of the cult of relics are present, determining the pattern of veneration of the saints that would last until the late Middle Ages. The parish's request that the holy person be buried in their community signifies the basic wish to be in proximity to the saints, their tombs and relics. They believed this could assure successful intercession before God and this became the strongest motivation for pilgrimage during the Middle Ages.[3] Numerous details in the account refer to the conception of the *corpus incorruptum* as main component of relic veneration.[4] The fire's lack of impact was caused by the indestructible body of the saint, which, as many translation reports of other saints note, could not be corrupted through decay. While the Romans denial of the untouched corpse corresponds to the early Christian concept of afterlife (where preservation of the body has to be seen as the main precondition for eternal life), the collecting of the bones from the ashes demonstrates that these remains could represent and substitute the whole, intact body—a belief firmly established since the 5th century—that would constitute one of the main justifications of the medieval cult of relics.

This leads to two conclusions which directly involve the question of devotional interaction: first, the medieval practice of the veneration of the saints is linked to their earthly remains, their body or body-parts, and second the veneration is focused on objects which do not merely represent, but *are* the holy, presenting a counterpart to the worshipper. Medieval image theory always stressed the difference between the divine and images of the divine, suggesting that these images serve only as a didactic agent to stimulate the memory of the faithful—

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[2] *Martyrium des Polykarp*, p. 280.

[3] For a discussion of the veneration of the saints and the cult of relics within a theological and religious history perspective see Arnold Angenendt, *Heilige und Reliquien. Die Geschichte ihres Kultes vom frühen Christentum bis zur Gegenwart* (München: Beck, 1997); Peter Brown, *The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

[4] Arnold Angenendt, "Corpus incorruptum. Eine Leitidee der mittelalterlichen Reliquienverehrung," *Saeculum* 42 (1991), pp. 320–48.

especially of those, who were not able to read the bible.[5] In contrast to the often-debated and always proscribed cult of images, the beholder's perception of relics was seen as an actual encounter with the holy, because here presence and representation was conflated and thus a cult was justified. Reliquaries shaped as body-parts served as simulacra which turned the fragmented relic back into the saint's spiritual body. Reliquary arms or busts reinforced interaction with the saint, because these types of reliquaries communicated (by speaking, gazing, and blessing) with the devotees, creating an actual encounter where a face-to-face experience of salvation was made possible.[6] The relics themselves were subject to various interactive venerations: they were displayed on the altars, carried in processions, the faithful touched and kissed them, and the saints tombs were designed in such a manner, that pilgrims could touch them, crawl under them or creep onto the slab to be near the healing and mediating power of the saint.[7] The relic represented the saint on earth and was understood to be a living actor, which improved its animated character by working miracles and pronouncing their own wishes.[8] Insofar interactivity, which in art history has more often been a subject of Renaissance and Early Modern art, and therefore has been focused on the relationship of art and the spectator, can for the Middle Ages, more widely be defined as a relationship between the saint and the worshipper, the relic and the pilgrim.

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[5] This notion of the function of images goes back to Gregory the Great (540–604), whose views were often repeated and served as the main justification for images during the Middle Ages. For a critical overview on the even in modern art history often stressed didactic functions of images see Viola Belghaus, "Inszenierter Dialog: Zur Interaktion von Schrift und Bild in einer mittelalterlichen Handschriftenillustration am Beispiel des Erfurter Codex Aureus (Ms. 249/2869)" in ed. Wilhelm Geerlings and Christian Schulze, *Der Kommentar in Antike und Mittelalter* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 2, pp. 129–62.

[6] Beate Fricke, *Ecce fides. Die Statue von Conques, Götzendienst und Bildkultur im Westen* (München: Fink, 2007) p. 20; Cynthia Hahn, "The Voices of the Saints: Speaking Reliquaries," *Gesta* 36 (1997) pp. 20–31.

[7] Barbara Abou-El-Haj, "The Audiences for the Medieval Cult of Saints," *Gesta* 30 (1991), pp. 3–15; Rocío Sánchez Ameijeires, "Imagery and Interactivity: Ritual Transaction at the Saint's Tomb" in ed. Stephen Lamia and Elizabeth Valdez del Alamo, *Decorations for the Holy Dead: Visual Embellishments on Tombs and Shrines of Saints* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), pp. 21–38.

[8] Legends of acting relics and reliquaries were written to establish a difference between relic veneration and idolatry. For examples see Renate Kroos, "Vom Umgang mit Reliquien" in ed. Anton Legner, *Ornamenta Ecclesiae. Kunst und Künstler der Romanik* (Köln: Schnütgen Museum, 1985), 3, pp. 25–49.

Although different medieval sources contain a good deal of information on the various practices of saint and relic veneration in general, precise and detailed descriptions of the shaping of a cult and the response of the worshipping audiences are lacking. To supplement this, it seems useful to bring into play the methodological approach of art and the spectator, which shows how works of art assume and demand, as John Shearman characterized it, a "more engaged spectator" and describes how their invention and design expressed the artist's response to the assumed presence of the spectator.[9] This refers to a distinction between the history of perception (*Rezeptionsgeschichte*) and the inherent strategies of works of art, shaping and affecting the beholder's perception (*Rezeptionsästhetik*), a distinction delineating between what really happened and what should happen in front of images or works of art.[10] Furthermore, for medieval art, we cannot stress the position of the artist in the same manner as for the Renaissance or Early Modern period, rather it is more appropriate to assume a *concepteur*, an imaginary construct of the artists, the advising theologians and the donators.[11] In this respect, questions regarding the performative structures of the veneration of saints are not a matter of a particular individual beholder's viewpoint which define interaction as an interchange of visual and tactile approach between the relic and the faithful. The cult of relics' interactive dimensions also need to be clarified, likewise, from the producers and "directors" of the cult, shaping the institutional context of veneration and the visual construction of sanctity.[12] From this point of view, the preservation of relics can be qualified as an accumulation and attribution of value in order to pro-

[9] On the relationship of art and spectator see John Shearman, *Only connect. Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (Princeton: University Press, 1992), p. 17 and Dietrich Erben, *Der steinerne Gast. Die Begegnung mit Statuen als Vorgeschichte der Betrachtung* (Weimar: VDG, 2005).

[10] Wolfgang Kemp, *Der Betrachter ist im Bild. Kunstwissenschaft und Rezeptionsästhetik* (Berlin: Reimer, 1992).

[11] Beat Brenk, "Der Concepteur und sein Adressat oder: Von der Verhüllung der Botschaft" in ed. Joachim Heinzle, *Modernes Mittelalter. Neue Bilder einer populären Epoche* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel, 1994), pp. 431–50.

[12] Written sources, describing the pilgrims' veneration, were influenced by the specific interests of the institutional background of the pilgrimage site and do not necessary refer to what really happened. Reports of the early veneration of St. Elizabeth in Marburg often speak of an overwhelming number of pilgrims and the crowded situation within the church, probably mostly to justify the need for a new building.

mote a sacred space where devotees' prayers and gifts could invoke communication with the saints.[13]

The concept of value carries the double-meaning of material and immaterial aspects and, according to the analogy of bones and stones in the Polykarp martyrdom, distinguishes a clear hierarchy between the different materials and links them with an attribution of value. The relationship of relics, gold and precious stones is of great importance, because from the early Middle Ages onward, it was usual to encase relics in gold and gem-studded reliquaries. Ever since the fourth Lateran council (1215) interdicted the presentation of relics *extra capsam*, these kinds of containers became obligatory.[14] Nevertheless, one should not forget that any veneration, despite the tremendous material value of its container, was always focused on the relic itself—the unpretentious part of the saint's body maintained the ultimate value, because of its heavenly participation with Christ's glorified body. The contrast, however, between the comparatively unglamorous substance of the bones and their precious containers consistently provoked theological debates. As one of the greatest critics of images, Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) argued against this excessive material splendor, for, according to him, the saints do not need any embellishment, because their holiness already exceeds material worth.[15]

The great number of medieval reliquaries demonstrate that the opposite was practiced and the analysis and description of these containers have played an important role within art-historical research. With their primary focus on iconographic problems and the development of

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[13] Beate Fricke showed that the *Liber miraculorum sancta Fidis*, reporting the miracles related to the reliquary statue of St. Foy in Conques, reveals a network of giving and receiving, of asking and answering, where not only the pilgrims plead for help, but St. Foy herself demanded certain gifts and thus collected her own church treasure, see Fricke, "Ecce fides," p. 250.

[14] On the consequences of the fourth Lateran Council see Gia Toussaint, "Die Sichtbarkeit des Gebeins im Reliquiar—eine Folge der Plünderung Konstantinopels?" in ed. Bruno Reudenbach and Gia Toussaint, *Reliquiare im Mittelalter* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005), pp. 89–106, p. 91.

[15] Susanne Wittekind, "Caput et corpus. Die Bedeutung der Sockel von Kopfreliquiaren" in ed. Bruno Reudenbach and Gia Toussaint, *Reliquiare im Mittelalter* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005), pp. 107–35. On the critical positions towards images and splendor within churches see Bernhard von Clairvaux, "Apologia ad Guillelmum Abbatum" in ed. Gerhard B. Winkler, *Bernhard von Clairvaux: Sämtliche Werke* (Innsbruck: Tyrolia, 1992), 2, pp. 145–203 and Conrad C. Rudolph, *The Things of Greater Importance. Bernhard of Clairvaux's Apologia and the Medieval Attitude towards Art* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990).

style and types of reliquaries, delineations of material, substance, value and meaning have been neglected.[16] Recently, a broader approach, including aspects from the history of religion, liturgy and perception as well as, the extensive production of legends and other hagiographic texts, linked with reliquaries, has enlarged our understanding of the functional contexts of medieval cult of relics and its practical experiences.[17] Within this enlarged focus, to return to the analogy of stones and bones, aspects of material aesthetics and material iconography can now receive more attention. While describing the materials of the reliquaries even in their references to the saint's iconography, those studies mediate between form and content. Therefore the shining gold represents the spiritual body of the saints (*corpus spirituale*), whereas the translucent gems (with their specific ability to reflect the light) serve as symbols for the saints' purity and virtues.[18] The frequent use

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[16] As generic history the pioneering study of Joseph Braun was incredibly influential and even today contains an indispensable collection of data. Joseph Braun, *Die Reliquiare des christlichen Kultes und ihre Entwicklung* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 1940).

[17] See as examples the papers of two interdisciplinary volumes, Bruno Reudenbach and Gia Toussaint, *Reliquiare im Mittelalter* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005) and Gottfried Kerscher, *Hagiographie und Kunst. Der Heiligenkult in Schrift, Bild und Architektur* (Berlin: Reimer, 1993). There are also a number of contributions illuminating the cult of relics from several different methodological and topical viewpoints, for example as a phenomenon of liturgy history, see Susanne Wittekind, *Altar—Reliquiar—Retabel. Kunst und Liturgie bei Wibald von Stablo* (Köln: Böhlau, 2004), medieval perception history and semiotics, see Toussaint, "Heiliges Gebein"; Christoph L. Diedrichs, *Vom Glauben zum Sehen. Die Sichtbarkeit der Reliquie im Reliquiar. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte des Sehens* (Berlin: Weißensee, 2001); Hartmut Kühne, *Ostensio reliquiarium. Untersuchungen über Entstehung, Ausbreitung, Gestalt und Funktion der Heiltumsweisungen im römisch-deutschen Regnum* (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 2000), as a medium of representation particularly with pictorial narratives and their references to hagiography, see Susanne Wittekind, "Heiligenviten und Reliquienschmuck im 12. Jahrhundert. Eine Studie zum Deutzer Heribertschrein" *Wallraf-Richartz Jahrbuch* 59 (1998), pp. 7–28; Viola Belghaus, *Der erzählte Körper. Die Inszenierung der Reliquien Karls des Großen und Elisabeths von Thüringen* (Berlin: Reimer, 2005); Cynthia Hahn, *Portrayed on the Heart. Narrative Effect in Pictorial Lives of Saints from the Tenth through the Thirteenth Century* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), as a phenomenon reflecting different medieval body concepts, see Caroline Walker Bynum and Paula Gerson, "Body-Part Reliquaries and Body Parts in the Middle Ages," *Gesta* 36 (1997), pp. 3–7, as well as their interrelation to the production and reception of legendary memory, see Amy G. Remensnyder, "Legendary Treasure at Conques: Reliquaries and Imaginative Memory," *Speculum* 71 (1996), pp. 884–906.

[18] On material iconography in general see Theo Jülich, "Sakrale Gegenstände und ihre Materialien als Bedeutungsträger," *Rheydter Jahrbuch für Geschichte, Kunst und Heimatkunde* 19 (1991), pp. 245–59; Thomas Raff, *Die Sprache der Materialien. Anleitung zu einer Ikonologie der Werkstoffe* (München: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1994); related to reliquaries and saints iconography see Bruno Reudenbach, "Reliquiare als

of ancient gems and cameos were chosen not only for their decorative purposes; as spolia from antiquity they contained reference to the holy past and could help document the relics' authenticity.[19]

Reliquaries were multilayered artifacts, and by restricting them to being merely objects of piety or just the pictorial medium of the saint's representation would reveal only part of their diverse function and meaning. Within the ceremonial orchestration of relic piety, the interaction of the saints and the faithful was organized as an encounter of the celestial with the mundane, providing different forms of ritual, visual, and, rarely, even tactile approaches by the mutual mobility of relics and beholders, thus identifying the cult of relics as a multivalent system of communication. Moreover, as part of the church treasure, both the holy substance (relic) and the precious artifact (reliquary) were integrated into collecting situations, and thus should be explained as parallel to the formation of treasuries and accumulation of value.

Heavenly Treasure: Blood, Bones and Stones

The analysis of treasure and treasuries has been approached through a heterogeneous lens.[20] Traditionally the purview of the fields of numismatics and archeology, treasure was thought of in the context of discovery. More recently, research in the humanities and social sciences examined treasuries in terms of economic, symbolic, and spiritual meanings. Both royal and church treasuries were unified in their

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Heiligkeitsbeweis und Echtheitszeugnis. Grundzüge einer problematischen Gattung," *Vorträge aus dem Warburg-Haus* 4 (2000), pp. 1–36, p. 8; Bruno Reudenbach and Gia Toussaint, "Die Wahrnehmung und Deutung von Heiligen. Überlegungen zur Medialität von Reliquiaren," *Das Mittelalter* 8 (2003), pp. 34–40.

[19] Reudenbach, "Reliquiare als Heiligkeitsbeweis," p. 22.

[20] Elizabeth M. Tyler, *Treasure in the Medieval West* (York: York Medieval Press, 2000); Valentin Groebner, "Schätze schätzen, Schätze schenken. Über Kostbarkeiten, Wahrnehmungen und Werte im spätmittelalterlichen Basel" in ed. Historisches Museum Basel, *Der Basler Münsterschatz* (Basel: Christoph Merian, 2001), pp. 242–51; Achatz von Müller, "Der Kirchenschatz als politisches Zeichensystem" in ed. Historisches Museum Basel, *Der Basler Münsterschatz* (Basel: Christoph Merian, 2001), pp. 217–29; Sauro Gelichi and Cristina La Rocca, *Tesori. Forme di accumulazione della richezza nell'alto medioevo* (Roma: Viella, 2004); Matthias Hardt, *Gold und Herrschaft. Die Schätze europäischer Könige und Fürsten im ersten Jahrtausend* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2004); Lucas Burkart, Philippe Cordez, Pierre-Alain Mariaux and Yann Potin, *Le trésor au Moyen Âge. Questions et perspectives de recherche / Der Schatz im Mittelalter. Fragestellungen und Forschungsperspektiven* (Neuchâtel: Institut d'Histoire de l'art et de Muséologie, 2005); Elisabeth Vavra, *Vom Umgang mit Schätzen* (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007).

ideal and economic aspects, which took on legitimate functions as instruments of power and treasuries of grace, while simultaneously guaranteeing the fiscal basis of exerted authority and institutional administration.[21] Yet with the formation of a treasury the economic loss, resulting from its, during process of formations accompanying exclusion from exchange and commercial traffic, was compensated by its additional function of creating meaning.[22]

Connected with medieval church treasures, this loss can be defined as deprivation from the profane world because access to treasuries were highly restricted. These specific circumstances enhanced the common status of the sacral objects enclosed there no matter their type or material, be it relics, liturgical equipment, vestments, or manuscripts. Even though, the term "sacral objects" seems to refer to religious objects, the sacral object is far more than that. Sacral objects, as Karl-Heinz Kohl explained, are stored in separate places, surrounded by taboos, have no practical use, and no clearly defined intended purpose. Their status is not dependent, like the analogy of bones and stones demonstrates, on form, material, or semantic conventions.[23] Hence, their specific value

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[21] From an economic viewpoint treasuries and the formation of treasuries can be defined as an accumulation of (material) values, withdrawn from commercial exchange and thus as 'dead capital' without any social role. See Lucas Burkart, "Schatz und Schatzbildung. Reflexionen zu disziplinärem Interesse und interdisziplinärem Zugang" in ed. Lucas Burkart, Philippe Cordez, Pierre-Alain Mariaux and Yann Potin, *Le trésor au Moyen Âge. Questions et perspectives de recherche / Der Schatz im Mittelalter. Fragestellungen und Forschungsperspektiven* (Neuchâtel: Institut d'Histoire de l'art et de Muséologie, 2005), pp. 1–25, p. 3. In contrast to this position, based on modern principles of the exchange of money and goods, anthropological and ethnological studies have revealed the function of gift exchange in traditional societies and proved the important role of treasury as gift and gift in return, contributing and confirming the establishment of social relationships, Burkart, "Schatz und Schatzbildung," p. 5; basically on exchange of gifts see Marcel Mauss, *Essai sur le don: forme et raison de l'echange dans les sociétés archäiques* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2007) and Maurice Godelier, *L'énigme du don* (Paris: Fayard, 1996). On Middle Ages gift exchanges see Arnoud-Jan A. Bijsterveld, "The Medieval Gift as Agent of Social Bonding and Political Power: A Comparative Approach" in ed. Esther Cohen and Mayke B. de Jong, *Medieval Transformations. Texts, Power, and Gifts in Context* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 123–156 and Nathalie Zemon Davies, *The Gift in Sixteenth-Century France* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2000).

[22] Burkart, "Schatz und Schatzbildung," p. 7 with reference to Georges Bataille, *Die Aufhebung der Ökonomie* (München: Matthes & Seitz, 2001).

[23] "Sakrale Objekte unterscheiden sich von allen Gegenständen durch ihre praktische Nutzlosigkeit, ihre Separierung von der Welt des Profanen, ihre reine Zeichenhaftigkeit und ihre Unveräußerlichkeit. Dabei handelt es sich nicht um Eigenschaften, die sich aus ihrer jeweiligen Substanz, Form oder auch Gestaltung ergeben. Vielmehr scheinen sie allein aus den besonderen Bedeutungen zu resultieren, die mit ihnen verknüpft

cannot be calculated from material or pecuniary benchmarks, but only from their symbolism and significance.[24] From this point of view the relics' status as a sacral object is obvious. Further, relics were often integrated into an ensemble with other sacred objects and, together with them, they represented the history of a church and the property and wealth of a community, thereby earning a specific value.

The value of a relic was not limited to simple material hierarchy (more noble than gems and more precious than gold); for relics unified ambiguous economic and symbolic values and meanings. As desired objects of exchange, they had an important role within the monetary system because as merchandise they were integrated in economic relations—profitable enough to encourage a large amount of forgeries. Moreover, the property and presentation of relics could increase pilgrims' spending on alms at the pilgrimage site.[25] Medieval chroniclers noted the abundant effects of vital relic cults, which resulted in a significant rise of importance and prosperity for both the saint's shrine and the religious community—as one episode from the life of St. Anno demonstrates. After the death of abbot Anno of Siegburg in the year 1075, the abbey's decline was accompanied with an economic distress causing the next abbot to allocate far less to the maintenance of each

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werden" Karl-Heinz Kohl, *Die Macht der Dinge. Geschichte und Theorie sakraler Objekte* (München: Beck, 2003), p. 154 and more details on p. 151.

[24] Kohl, "Die Macht der Dinge," p. 155. Lucas Burkart clarified the identity of treasure and its representational function, using the example of medieval insignias of power. Therefore during the double election of Ludwig IV (1281/82–1347) and Friedrich of Habsburg (1289–1330) the identity of treasure and empire becomes evident. A medieval chronicle reports the insignias' presentation by Friedrich, specifying them as "the signs called the empire" and thus insisting on their legitimative character (*Mostrabantur item inibi sanctuariorum insignia, que regnum dicuntur, scilicet, lancea, clavus, pars crucis Salvatoris, corona Karoli, gladii et alia*). See Matthias von Neuenburg, *Chronica*, ed. Adolf Hofmeister, *Monumenta Germania Historia, Scriptores, Rerum Germanicarum Nova Series IV* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1955), p. 100. During the early Middle Ages the legitimative function was not yet related on the ensemble of insignia as a whole, but focused on the single object. This explains Henry II's anger, when, after the death of Otto III in 1002 the insignia were given to him without the holy lance, Burkart, "Schatz und Schatzbildung," p. 12 and on the meaning of the holy lance see p. 15.

[25] On trade of relics, see Markus Mayr, *Geld, Macht und Reliquien. Wirtschaftliche Auswirkungen des Reliquienkults im Mittelalter* (Innsbruck: Studien-Verlag, 2000). On the coherence of relics' presentation and increased alms see Gerhard Weilandt, "Heiligen-Konjunktur. Reliquienpräsentation, Reliquienverehrung und wirtschaftliche Situation an der Nürnberger Lorenzkirche im Spätmittelalter" in ed. Markus Mayr, *Von goldenen Gebeinen. Wirtschaft und Reliquie im Mittelalter* (Innsbruck: Studien-Verlag, 2001), pp. 186–220.

the monk (lower than was customary) and reducing the number of candles so that they extinguished before the end of Mass. Thereupon, a vision of Anno appeared before two of the monks, angrily condemning the meager fare and the sexton's meanness, dismissing the monks' excuses regarding the lack of contributions after the death of the founder. Anno pointed out that through his own heavenly elevation the abbey would prosper from the pilgrims' veneration of his tomb: "Only in a little while, you will see, that the suspected lack will be altered in a rich abundance of all things and you will be astonished on that miracle happening to you. […] I, your father Anno, will send you, as messenger of my promise. From now on, just some days will pass, and the lack of wax will be altered to affluence and you will weary from collecting all the rest."[26]

This episode illustrates that relics conveyed both economic use and spiritual meaning, and that their value could be defined in material and immaterial terms. The vision delineates a causal relation between the benefit for the monk's community and the saint's participation in heavenly glory by granting the intermediation of celestial salvation for pilgrims. The material benefit, for which the overabundance of wax serves as an example, is always accompanied by immaterial grace. In fact, the relics' treasure consistently serves as a metaphor for the *thesaurus ecclesiae*, an immaterial treasure where the blood of Christ and the martyrs is collected. Since Augustine (354–430) this treasure was

[26] *Nec longa inter hec mora, dum tristicie talis nubila verterentur in gaudiorum claritatem. Ac primo sui tumuli excubitores cepit per somnia visus consolari, dein rebus evidentibus de sua glorificatione certificare. Siquidem abbate pro metu suspecte penurie parcius ac vilius solito fratrum stipendia sumministrante cuidam fratri noctu videbatur astare vehemens inquisitor et pro esce vilitate, quam idem frater preparabat, se offensum ostendere. Cum ille de indigentia causaretur, quod ipso fundatore ac patre defuncto iam solatiis usquequaque locus destitueretur, tum pater beatissimus: "Numquid", ait, "ut asseris, revera me mortuum existimatis? Sit procul a vobis hec suspicio, nam illa nunc fruor vita que tota summe beatitudines eternitate redundat, ad quam tunc comparatus, cum dicebar a vobis vivere, quasi qui non essem, rectis credi debueram. Unde hoc a me perfer abbati mandatum, ne ultra fratrum alendorum mensuras imminuat. Adhuc enim modicum, et suspectam vobis inopiam plena rerum omnium copia commutari videbitis et miraculo vestro stupescetis." Alia rursum revelatione uni fratrum se letum ingerens tenaciam custodis admirari se dixit, qui divina celebrantibus tam parce luminaria distribueret, ut nonnumquam sacramentis necdum completis deficerunt. Cum et iste inopiam pretenderet, eo quod nulla nisi precio questia cera haberetur, sanctus Dei blande arridens: "Te," inquit, "promissionis mee nuncium, Anno pater vester, ad fratres dirigo, quod non multi ex hoc preterirent dies, et illa, que nunc est vobis cere penuria in tantam vertetur abundantiam, ut etiam colligendi vobis tedia ingerantur"*, see *Vita Annonis Minor. Die Jüngere Annovita*, ed. Mauritius Mittler OSB (Siegburg: Schmitt, 1975), p. 126.

tied to the conception of the treasure of grace (*thesaurus meritorum*), founded on the notion that Christ and his saints' sufferings produced an overabundance of grace which the church could spend on the penance for the faithful. This conception dominated the cult of relics and eventually the amount of accorded grace was systemized in the doctrine of indulgences during the high Middle Ages making it accessible for the faithful.[27]

As mentioned above, the specific value of the relic can be defined as representational, for the relic does not *refer* to the holy, but *is* the holy.[28] Even Thiofrid of Echternach (1081–1110), author of the most important medieval treatise on relics, defined the relic as a tangible corporeal medium, manifesting the divine within the secular world, denoting the relic's sacred character which could be transferred from relic to reliquary. Thus, the debate on the splendor of reliquaries was qualified by those functions, for the precious material of reliquaries did not establish a value for themselves, rather they achieved this

[27] Burkart, "Schatz und Schatzbildung," p. 11; Philippe Cordez, "Les usages du trésor des graces. L'économie idéelle et materielle des indulgences au Moyen Âge" in ed. Lucas Burkart, Philippe Cordez, Pierre-Alain Mariaux and Yann Potin, *Le trésor au Moyen Âge. Questions et perspectives de recherche / Der Schatz im Mittelalter. Fragestellungen und Forschungsperspektiven* (Neuchâtel: Institut d'Histoire de l'art et de Muséologie, 2005), pp. 55–88.

[28] Even though the meaning of relics is excluded from semantic transformations, the church treasure as an ensemble assumed different dimensions of meaning and value, as the church treasure of Basel can demonstrate, see Lucas Burkart, "Politische Investitionen. Die Geschichte des Basler Münsterschatzes vom 11. Jahrhundert bis zur Reformation" in ed. Historisches Museum Basel, *Der Basler Münsterschatz* (Basel: Christoph Merian, 2001), pp. 230–41; Lucas Burkart, "Das crutzsyfix, so im munster uff dem letner stund. Bildersturm als Mediengeschichte" in ed. Peter Blickle *et al.*, *Macht und Ohnmacht der Bilder. Reformatorischer Bildersturm im Kontext der europäischen Geschichte* (München: Oldenbourg, 2002), pp. 177–93; Lucas Burkart, "Zwischen Liturgie, Politik und Kunst. Kontinuität, Transformation und Wahrnehmung von Werten im Basler Münsterschatz 1400–1850" in ed. Maria Luisa Allemeyer *et al.*, *Eule oder Nachtigall? Tendenzen und Perspektiven kulturwissenschaftlicher Werteforschung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), pp. 186–205. Comparable transformations of church treasury can especially be observed during the German Reformation, which implied a radical turning-point for the cult of relics. See Anton Schindling, "Die Reformation in den Reichsstädten und die Kirchengüter. Straßburg, Nürnberg und Frankfurt im Vergleich" in ed. Jürgen Sydow, *Bürgerschaft und Kirche* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke 1980), pp. 67–88. Refused as superstition by reformers, the veneration of relics could no longer be integrated into the new theological doctrine and as a result within the reformed territories relics lost their importance entirely. This radical denial likewise indicates their character of real presence and because of the identity of sign and signified no adoption was possible. On practices of revaluation in general see Michael Thompson, *Rubbish Theory: The Creation and Destruction of Value* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).

value only through the presence of the relic. Thiofrid used the coupled term of "gold and ashes" to describe the material contrast of relic and reliquary and he distinguished them by their accidental nature not from their substantial attributes (*specie, non genere, colore, non veritate naturae*).[29] Debates on the term of value within cultural history, have shown a lack of differentiation in ancient societies, between material and economic value on the one hand and ethical and aesthetic value on the other—a methodological separation specific for modern discourse. Thiofrid exemplifies this first in his treatise where values do not have, according to the material comparison of relics and gold, an absolute status, but are conditioned by the viewpoint and the cultural context of the evaluating persons. Second, especially in medieval societies, these objects belong to a sphere of (social) exchange und therefore denote valuations, linked on equivalences of service and reward, and third, they manifest themselves within a coincidence of material and immaterial values, only distinguished by symbolic codification.[30]

Public saint and shared relics: St. Elizabeth on display

Soon after the 1231 death of countess Elizabeth of Thuringia, the reputation of her sanctity spread. Her attention to the poor and sick so far exceeded the established ideal of noble women's poor-relief that she became immensely popular, earning the admiration and veneration of the faithful. During her lifetime she showed a pronounced concern to the poor, and following the death of her husband, this focus increased when she renounced all the privileges of her status and founded (under the guidance of her confessor Konrad of Marburg, 1080/90–1233) a

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[29] Thiofridus Epternacensis, "Flores epytaphii sanctorum," ed. Michele C. Ferrari, II 2, p. 34. On the material contrast of gold and ashes see Ferrari, "Gold und Asche," p. 70. On the coherence of relic and reliquary see Wolfgang Kemp, "Substanz wird Form. Form ist Beziehung. Zum Remaklus-Altar der Abtei Stavelot" in ed. Martin Papenbrock *et al., Kunst und Sozialgeschichte. Festschrift für Jutta Held* (Pfaffenweiler: Centaurus, 1995), pp. 219–34.

[30] Barbara Stollberg-Rilinger, "Die Historiker und die Werte" in ed. Maria Luisa Allemeyer *et al*., *Eule oder Nachtigall? Tendenzen und Perspektiven kulturwissenschaftlicher Werteforschung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), pp. 35–48; Katharina Ulrike Mersch, "Eule oder Nachtigall? Überlegungen zum Wert historischer Werteforschung" in ed. Maria Luise Allemeyer *et al*., *Eule oder Nachtigall? Tendenzen und Perspektiven kulturwissenschaftlicher Werteforschung* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2007), pp. 9–34; Christoph Halbig, "Ethische und ästhetische Werte. Überlegungen zu ihrem Verhältnis" in ed. Gerd Althoff, *Zeichen—Rituale—Werte* (Münster: Rhema, 2004), pp. 37–53.

hospital in Marburg, to spend the rest of her life in service to the poor.[31] Because of this, her canonization was carried out with unusual rapidly: only four years after her death, Elizabeth was canonized in Perugia on May 27, 1235. Elizabeth represented a new type of saint, growing in importance and influence, fostered particularly through the poverty movement. Since early Christianity only a limited number of saintly types had been established: martyrs, confessors, and virgins. From the 12th-century onward, there emerged new models of lay sainthood, including noble men and women, who lived a particularly exemplary and virtuous life.[32] The lifework and specific virtues of these new, prospective saints were presented to contemporary awareness in a mixed fashion. Immediately after Elizabeth's death descriptions of her life emerged which included testimony of contemporary witnesses, proving the truth of the narration, but which also followed the typical patterns of saints' lives.[33] The bodies of those new saints were within easy reach, even after the burial, and there existed enough information about the exact place and the precise occasion of the relic's elevation, all of which helped bolster the claims for authenticity of the relics. Simultaneously, starting in the 12th century, the canonization process required new evidence for the promotion of saints, transforming it into a formal-legal procedure dependant on the approval of the pope.[34]

The first step of this process was taken one year after Elizabeth's death by her confessor Konrad of Marburg. His promptness indicates, without doubt, that from the beginning his purpose was focused on a canonization. Furthermore he had a sense of effective public staging and so he used every means of formal and informal cult propagation.[35]

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[31] On the life of Saint Elizabeth see Matthias Werner, "Elisabeth von Thüringen, Franziskus von Assisi und Konrad von Marburg" in ed. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner, *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 2, pp. 109–35; Martina Wehrli-Johns, "Armenfürsorge, Spitaldienst und neues Büßertum in den frühen Berichten über das Leben der heiligen Elisabeth" in ed. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner, *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 2, pp. 153–63.

[32] Michael Goodich, *Vita Perfecta: The Ideal of Sainthood in the thirteenth Century* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1982).

[33] On the early texts regarding Elizabeth's life see Belghaus, "Der erzählte Körper," p. 151.

[34] Bernhard Schimmelpfennig, "Heilige Päpste—päpstliche Kanonisationspolitik" in ed. Jürgen Petersohn, *Politik und Heiligenverehrung im Hochmittelalter* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1994), pp. 73–100.

[35] See the description of Irmgard, one of Elizabeth's maids in the witness report of her four maids in the hospital, *Der sog. Libellus de dictis quatuor ancillarum s.*

To inaugurate the canonization process, he introduced the *Summa vite*, a short description of Elizabeth's life into the official portfolio sent to the curia in Rome, a record reporting that a large number of miracles had already occurred at her tomb. Of more importance, however, and far more effective, were those measures, Konrad induced to support pilgrimage to the tomb of the prospective saint, using the spontaneous cult that arose instantly after her death. Those measures were focused on the body of the deceased, his presentation and staging within early veneration, as well as on an active production of relics, to establish a saintly cult before the end of the official canonization process.

After Elizabeth's death, Konrad laid out her body in the hospital's chapel. The public presentation lasted four days, with only inadequate measures used to preserve the body from the grasping hands of the faithful, so consequently some of her relics were taken by devotees.[36] After the burial, the tomb remained accessible to the pilgrims. The hospital's chapel was quickly replaced by the new building of the *ecclesia lapidea*, a small church especially designed for pilgrimage, which moved her tomb from a separate apse to an open place between the nave and chancel, offering devotees the possibility of touching it from both sides. (fig. 7.1) Although the burial stopped the extraction of relics, the tactile grasp on the prospective saint was retained as the pilgrims were allowed to remove portions of the tomb's dirt for medical purposes and the tomb itself was built low enough to allow even the lame to lay upon its slab.[37] What appears, at first sight, like a tumultuous and uncontrolled situation at the tomb, was evidently intended, for the custodians of the tomb did nothing to prevent this interaction. Rather they were there to, as Andreas Köstler assumed, witness the miracles occurring.[38] These happenings illustrate the practice of devotional interaction from the perspective of both participants of the cult. It signifies the desire of the faithful to obtain proximity to the

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Elisabeth confectus, ed. Albert Huyskens (München/Kempten: Kösel, 1911), p. 79; Uwe Geese, *Reliquienverehrung und Herrschaftsvermittlung. Die mediale Beschaffenheit der Reliquien im frühen Elisabethkult* (Darmstadt/Marburg: Hessische Historische Kommission, 1984), p. 119; on the different phases of the canonization see Andreas Köstler, *Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche. Zur Ästhetisierung des Kultraums im Mittelalter* (Berlin: Reimer, 1995), pp. 16–23 and Belghaus, "Der erzählte Körper," pp. 125–36.

[36] Köstler, "Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche," p. 16.

[37] Geese, "Reliquienverehrung und Herrschaftsvermittlung," p. 52.

[38] Köstler, "Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche," p. 17.

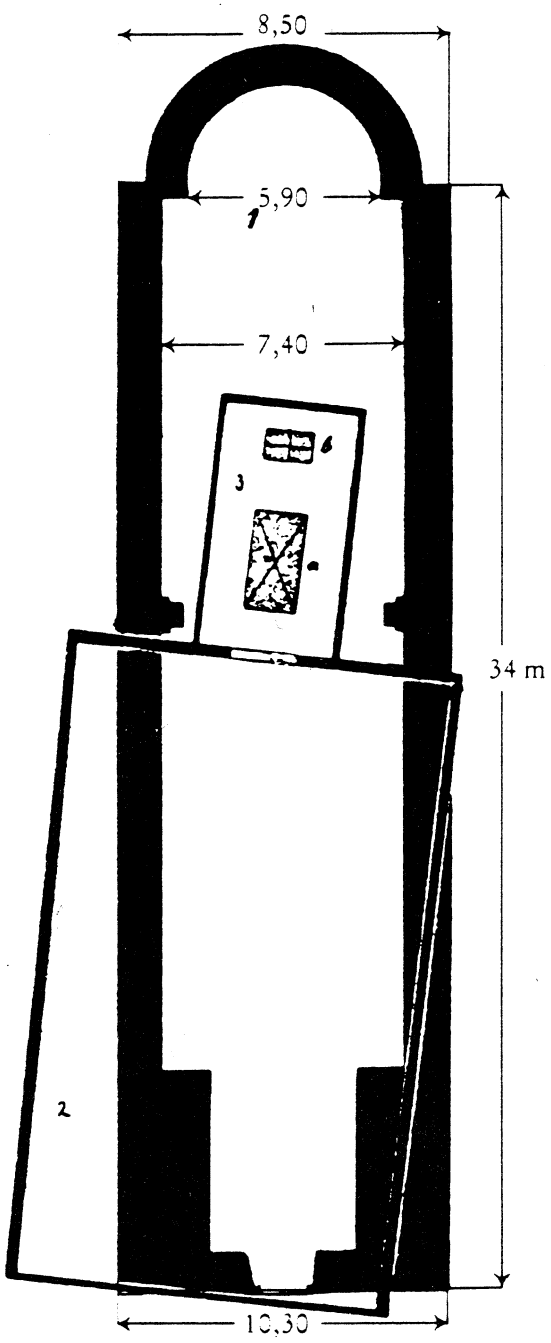

Fig. 7.1 Marburg, Hospital chapel and *ecclesia lapidea, c.* 1232 (Ground plan). Photo: public domain image.

prospective saint, which included the basic wish to obtain portions of her remains—parts of her body before and parts of her tomb's dirt after her burial—to get in contact to the healing power of the saint. Yet this access was not completely uncontrolled, but directed and staged by Konrad of Marburg. He used the displayed body and the accessible tomb to encourage devotion, enduring the grasping hands to install a cult and promote pilgrimage. The actual veneration and the recorded miracles would benefit the arguments for canonization and this kind of access helped establish the new pilgrimage site at Marburg, whose attractiveness was further enhanced by indulgences granted upon a visit to the church.[39] Similar marketing strategies linked with a saint's tomb are also apparent at other pilgrimage sites, though most date to the later Middle Ages.[40]

The institutional context of the early veneration can be described as a formation of a treasury, where an exemplary woman was promoted to sainthood, her dead body becoming a sacred object. This process depended on the encouraged devotion of the faithful, the pilgrimage motivated by the orchestration of the masses, and the production of relics used by Konrad to create spiritual and symbolic values. For the faithful the spiritual value of the saint was central, for it guaranteed the healing power of the relics and the tomb, while for Konrad these spiritual notions were enlarged by symbolic values, because they enhanced the importance of the new pilgrimage site. Saints can never be reduced to merely spiritual meaning, their material remains refer

[39] The indulgence charters are recorded in *Hessisches Urkundenbuch. Urkundenbuch der Deutschordensballei Hessen*, 1 (1207–1299), ed. Arthur Wyss (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1879), Nos. 28, 30, 59, 60, 73, 76, 80, 113, 123, 125.

[40] The propagation of pilgrimage during the late Middle Ages was characterized by the competition of numerous pilgrimage sites and many miracle reports stressed the attractiveness of a cult with a promise of healing, see Harry Kühnel, "Werbung, Wunder und Wallfahrt" in ed. Gerhard Jaritz, *Wallfahrt und Alltag in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1992), pp. 95–113; Constanze Hofmann-Rendtel, "Wallfahrt und Konkurrenz im Spiegel hochmittelalterlicher Mirakelberichte" in ed. Gerhard Jaritz, *Wallfahrt und Alltag in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1992), pp. 115–31; Barbara Heller-Schuh, "Hilfe in allen Nöten? Inhalte von hoch- und spätmittelalterlichen Mirakelsammlungen im Vergleich" in ed. Martin Heinzelmann *et al., Mirakel im Mittelalter. Konzeptionen, Erscheinungsformen, Deutungen* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2002), pp. 151–65. In the early and high Middle Ages similar strategies can be observed in hagiographic sources and other records of saintly propagation, see the already instanced Annovita (s. a.) and for another example Barbara Abou-El-Haj, "Bury St. Edmunds Abbey between 1070 and 1124: A History of Property, Privilege, and Monastic Art Production," *Art History* 6 (1983), pp. 1–29.

to their earthly presence, joining the holy past with a sacred present and constituting the treasury as its spiritual and symbolic core, as an invention and a steady renewal of a *loca sancta*.[41]

During the first years after Elizabeth's death all activities were focused on the promotion of the new saint. The public display of her body and the relocation of her tomb demonstrate how the saint occupied the spiritual and spatial center of the church. The chosen construction of sanctity, above all, stressed her unselfish devotion for the poor and sick and continued her charitable work with the meticulous documentation of the healing miracles at her tomb. This established the framework for an intensified veneration already before the canonization in 1235, and indeed, for a while, Elizabeth became one of the most popular saints of the late Middle Ages. Very soon, however, things changed. First, the canonization process stagnated, because of the death of its most engaged supporter Konrad of Marburg in 1233. A new attempt to foster the cult occurred the following year, when the Thuringian landgraves recalled their former relationship to Elizabeth. This kindled new interest is remarkable because during her lifetime the relationship of Elizabeth and her brothers-in-law was quite tense. Her distinctive charity and disregard of traditional noble behavior were seen as an imposition on her noble contemporaries. Consequently the first months of her widowhood were characterized by disputes on whether to marry again, where she would live and who would fund her ambitious charitable work. A countess, devoting herself radical to voluntary poverty challenged the traditional justifications of social hierarchy and noble reign.[42]

Yet, as a saint, she could be tremendously valuable for the justification of the landgraves as long as they were able to exert control over the development of her cult and of the saint's model deriving from her example. This seemed to be necessary for the reputation of the landgraves, because during the early veneration rumors of her violent expulsion from the court circulated, which were reinforced by later

[41] Cynthia Hahn, "Seeing and believing: The Construction of Sanctity in Early-Medieval Saints' Shrines," *Speculum* 72 (1997), pp. 1079–1106.

[42] Otto Gerhard Oexle, "Armut und Armenfürsorge um 1200. Ein Beitrag zum Verständnis der freiwilligen Armut bei Elisabeth von Thüringen" in ed. Philipps-Universität Marburg in Verbindung mit dem Hessischen Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde, *Sankt Elisabeth. Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1981), pp. 78–100, p. 79.

medieval legends.[43] The new constellation of actors directing and influencing the cult with their specific ambitions began a new phase of veneration which, through its transformation, the formerly popular pilgrimage dwindled in importance, finally coming to an end. The quick decline of pilgrimage in Marburg is reflected during the second half of the 14th century when pilgrimage yielded very little money. A pilgrims' cemetery in use until at least 1268, was transformed to a hospital graveyard starting in 1284. Furthermore only a very few written sources on the liturgy at the tomb have survived and no significant number of pilgrim badges have been found.[44] Moreover, the personal and institutional transformation of the hospital donation resulted in a reconfiguration of the sacral topography in Marburg, which took over the central role with the decline of pilgrimage.

Deprivation and accumulation: The invisible saint

The intervention of Landgrave Konrad of Thuringia (1206–1240) introduced the next phase, first the canonization, then the transfer of the hospital to the tutelage of the Teutonic Order in order to grant a lasting institutional security to Elizabeth's donation. Konrad himself joined the order in the year 1234, guaranteeing a personal relationship with the Thuringian landgraves and the continuity of their interests.[45] The construction of the church of the Teutonic Order in Marburg, substituting the *ecclesia lapidea*, created new conditions for the architectural and liturgical frame of the cult.[46] The revaluation linked with

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[43] How persistent these legends were is demonstrated within the late medieval iconography of the countess life, in which only rarely were these events omitted. For example, see the cycle of scenes from Elizabeth's life in the chapel of the Holy-Ghost-Hospital in Lübeck in Walter Nigg, *Elisabeth von Thüringen. Die Mutter der Armen* (Freiburg/Basel/Wien: Herder, 1979), fig. 38.

[44] Köstler, "Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche," p. 61; Wolfgang Brückner, "Zu Heiligenkult und Wallfahrtswesen im 13. Jahrhundert. Einordnungsversuch der volksfrommen Elisabeth-Verehrung in Marburg" in ed. Philipps-Universität Marburg in Verbindung mit dem Hessischen Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde, *Sankt Elisabeth. Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1981), pp. 117–27.

[45] Matthias Werner, "Mater Hassiae—Flos Ungariae—Gloria Teutoniae. Politik und Heiligenverehrung im Nachleben der hl. Elisabeth" in ed. Jürgen Petersohn, *Politik und Heiligenverehrung im Hochmittelalter* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1994), pp. 449–540, p. 462.

[46] Jürgen Michler, *Die Elisabethkirche zu Marburg in ihrer ursprünglichen Farbigkeit* (Marburg: Elwert, 1984), p. 29; Köstler, "Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche," p. 21.

the intervention of the landgraves is manifested in the rearrangement of the spatial organization and the location of the tomb. Rather than constructing the church with an ambulatory, typical of pilgrimage architecture, the Teutonic Order preferred a triple apse. The tomb now no longer marked the center, but was moved to the outer wall of the northern apse. (fig. 7.2)

Elizabeth's canonization created the setting for the elevation and was executed in two steps: the elevation from her grave (1236) and her relics' later translation to the reliquary shrine (1249). On the 1st of May 1236, during a public ceremony with a huge crowd of spectators—including even Emperor Frederick II (1194–1250)—the relics were elevated from the grave and deposited in a lead casket on the high altar. Elizabeth's skull was previously separated from the other relics and given to Frederick II, who donated an ancient agate bowl and a crown, which were assembled into a precious reliquary for the skull.[47] (fig. 7.3) His participation to the elevation and his gift reveals the political meaning Elizabeth had achieved, for his contribution has to be seen mostly as a political approval of the poverty movement. Promptly after the elevation in Marburg he sent a letter to the Franciscan Elias of Cortona (1180–1253), including detailed information on Elizabeth's virtues, to assure his solidarity to the Franciscan Order he needed for his own politics in Italy.[48]

For the pilgrims, this translation was unsatisfactory because the relics' placement within the sanctuary made them unreachable. The situation was made even more difficult in 1249 when the relics were translated to the new reliquary shrine, (fig. 7.4) whose exact placement is difficult to reconstruct, but was certainly as inaccessible as the original lead casket. Soon after the final consecration of the church in 1283, the high altar of the eastern apse was replaced with a new altar and a modern retable. A vault was added behind this new altar, which is often assumed to have been designed for the shrine, but since it was left unfinished, it seems unlikely that it ever served as the particular

[47] On the skull reliquary see Karl Heinrich Rexroth, "Das Stockholmer Reliquiar Kaiser Friedrichs II. und der heiligen Elisabeth," *Hessische Heimat* 31 (1981), pp. 122–37.

[48] On the political circumstances of Frederick II's participation see Helmut Beumann, "Friedrich II. und die heilige Elisabeth. Zum Besuch des Kaisers in Marburg am 1. Mai 1236" in ed. Philipps-Universität Marburg in Verbindung mit dem Hessischen Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde, *Sankt Elisabeth. Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1981), pp. 151–66; Percy Ernst Schramm, *Kaiser Friedrichs II. Herrschaftszeichen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955), pp. 16–51.

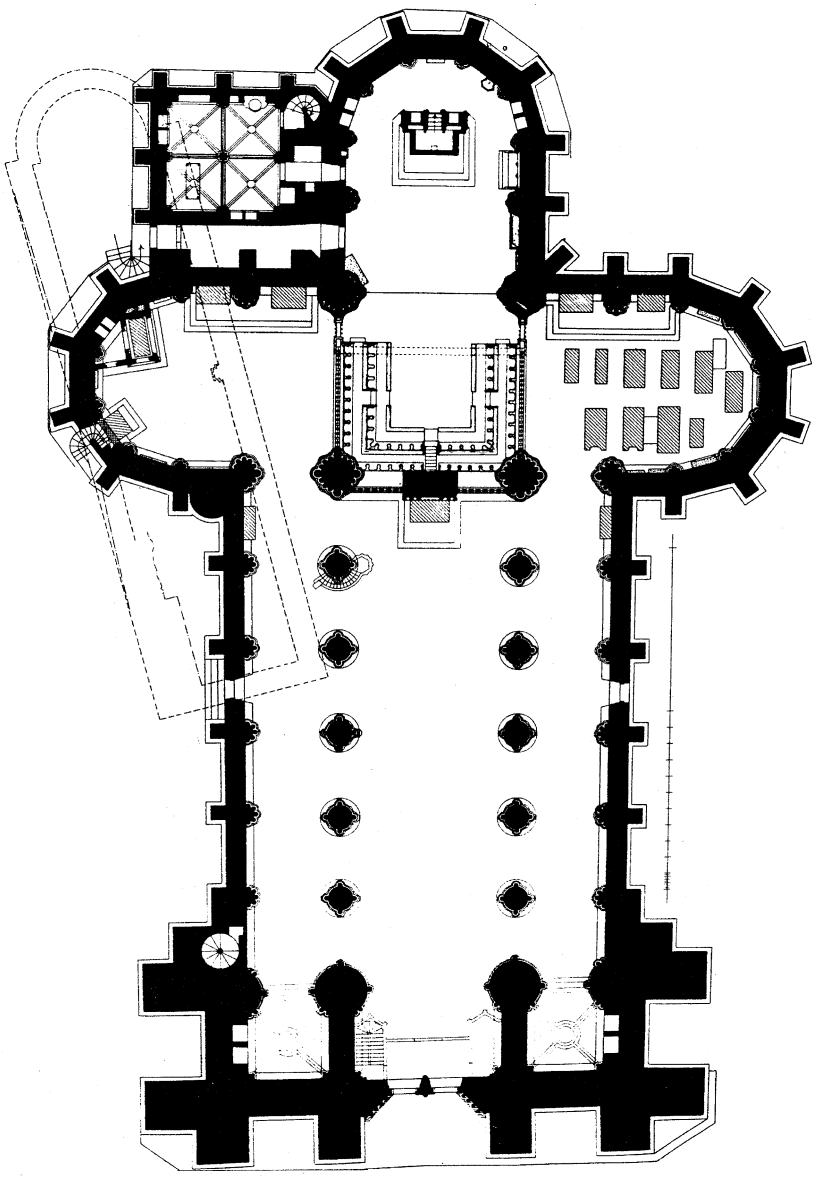

Fig. 7.2 Marburg, St. Elizabeth, *c.* 1283 (Ground plan). Photo: public domain image.

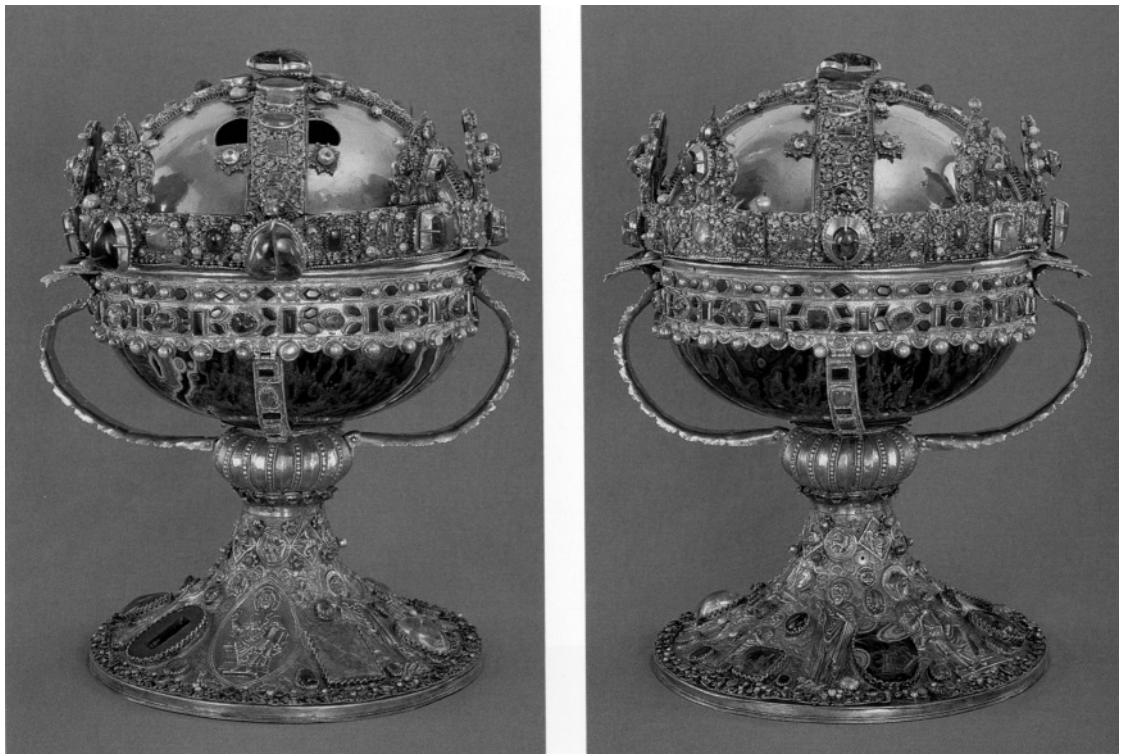

Fig. 7.3 Skull reliquary, *c.* 1236 (Stockholm, Statens Historiska Museet). Photo: after Bruno Reudenbach, "Kopf, Arm und Leib. Reliquien und Reliquiare der heiligen Elisabeth" in *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige*, eds. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 2, pp. 193–202.

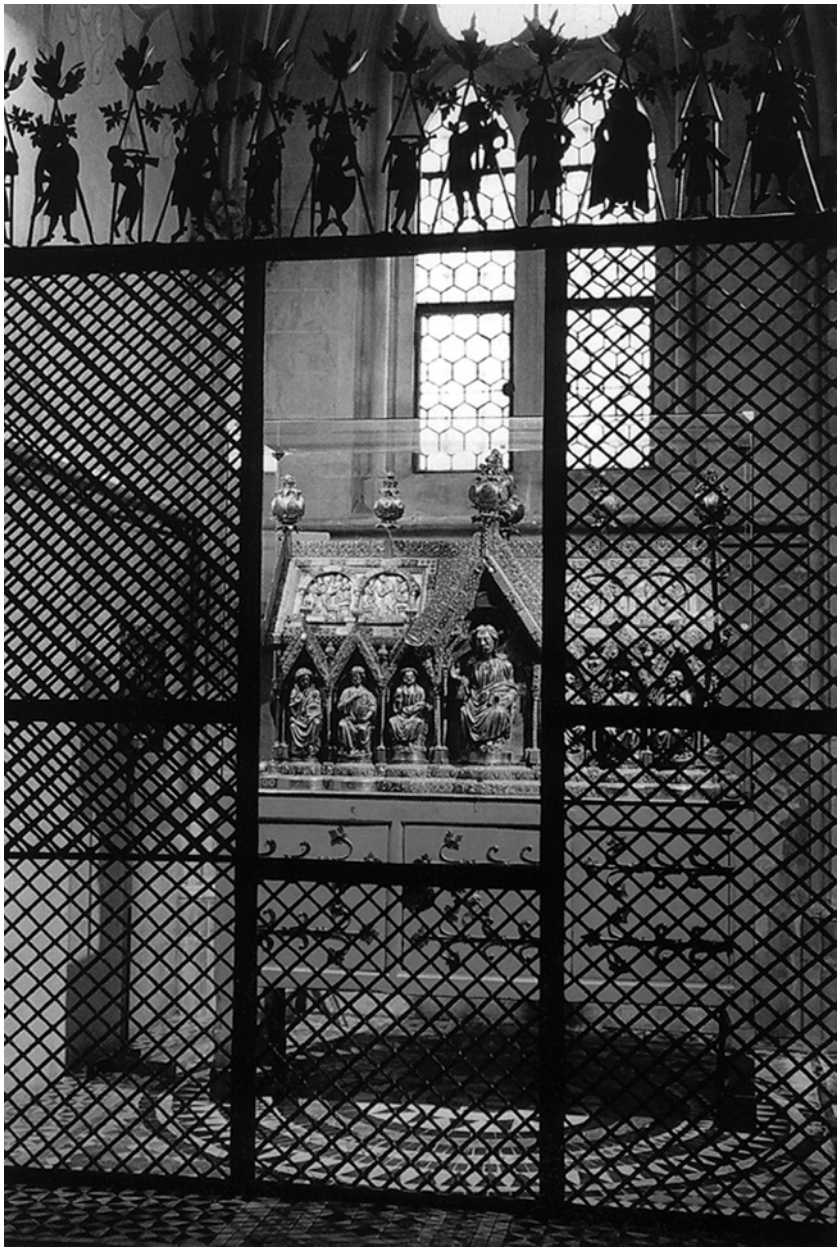

Fig. 7.4 Reliquary shrine, View into the sacristy, *c.* 1249 (Marburg, St. Elizabeth). Photo: Andreas Köstler.

place for the shrine. After that there is no clear evidence on its exact placement until *c.* 1320, when it was placed in the church's sacristy, removing it even further from the liturgy and veneration of pilgrims.[49] Thus, there was ever-more limited access to the relics and a successive withdrawal of the saint from the hub of pilgrimage.

The placing of the reliquary shrine in the sacristy was probably chosen because sacristies were commonly used to store relics and reliquaries along with other items of the church treasure.[50] Nonetheless, the relics and reliquaries in sacristies were not invisible to the faithful. Often windows placed toward the nave of the church were especially designed for the presentation of relics, making the absent visible from time to time and vivid within the memory of the faithful.[51] However, in the case of Elizabeth's relics it was reversed. There is no evidence that the relics were presented outside the shrine; the sacristy was only accessible to small numbers of devotees, and even a visit to the shrine was complicated due to its surrounding grille. On this grille, small figures cut from tinplate portray a meeting between Emperor Ludwig IV (1281/82–1347) and the Hassian landgraves in Marburg during 1326 visually indicating the preferred high noble visitors for this setting.[52] (fig. 7.4)

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[49] Köstler, "Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche," p. 28. A reconstruction of shrine and vault is illustrated in Werner Jacobsen, "Altarraum und Heiligengrab als liturgisches Konzept in der Auseinandersetzung des Nordens mit Rom" in ed. Nicolas Bock, *Kunst und Liturgie im Mittelalter* (München: Hirmer, 2000), pp. 65–74, esp. p. 74.

[50] Because of its function as a treasure room, the sacristy usually was one of the safest places in church. Anne Schaich, "Mittelalterliche Sakristeien: Schlüsselgewalt und Kontrolle" in ed. Caroline Emmelius *et al.*, *Offen und Verborgen. Vorstellungen und Praktiken des Öffentlichen und Privaten in Mittelalter und Früher Neuzeit* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2004), pp. 195–210.

[51] Rolf J. Schneider, "Reliquien, ihre Verehrung und die Seligenstädter Schatz- und 'Hailtumbskammer'," *Das Münster* 54 (2001), pp. 36–44.

[52] Thomas Franke assumed that the shrine's placement within the sacristy was chosen from security reasons. Thomas Franke, "Zur Geschichte der Elisabethreliquien im Mittelalter und der frühen Neuzeit" in ed. Philipps-Universität Marburg in Verbindung mit dem Hessischen Landesamt für geschichtliche Landeskunde, *Sankt Elisabeth. Fürstin, Dienerin, Heilige* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1981), pp. 167–78, esp. p. 168. But even the high altar within the sanctuary would have been a safe place and since the sacristy was not open to public, the grille signifies that this placement allowed an impressive staging, for the additional boundaries to the saint could gradually be opened to visitors of high rank, see Köstler, "Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche," p. 36; Hans Joachim Brockhusen, "Wallfahrt und Fürstentreffen in Marburg 1326. Figuren auf dem Tresorgitter der Grabeskirche" in ed. Eberhard Leppin, *700 Jahre Elisabethkirche in Marburg 1283–1983* (Marburg: Elwert, 1983) 8, pp. 13–16.

Even the tomb, which could have been used by venerating pilgrims as a substitute, was divided from them during the building campaign. Initially a monumental mausoleum was built above the tomb with an offertory placed on the slab. Defining the practical experience during a visit to the tomb, the slab provided the essential connection between intercession and alms gift. This interrelation was crucial during that period because the construction of the new church and the fabrication of the precious shrine posed extensive financial challenges to the Teutonic Order, which shows that the pilgrims also served as an important economic factor. These different phases of Elizabeth's cult propagation demonstrate that the construction of sanctity was affected not only by the devotion of the pilgrims and their desire to touch the mediating power of a saint, but sanctity was fabricated within a social and institutional framework. The devotional interaction depended on the creation of architectural settings, the relics' presentation, and the images linked to the saint. For that reason, it is important to describe devotional interaction not alone in terms of what pilgrims did, but how the configuration and environment of a pilgrimage site was designed to enable and assign latitudes for different groups of venerating pilgrims. From that point of view, a steady revaluation of Elizabeth can be observed. While Konrad of Marburg turned her dead body into a treasury of relics, containing spiritual and symbolic values, and transformed Marburg into an important pilgrimage site, the Thuringian landgraves together with the Teutonic Order added economic value, deriving from pilgrimage and the saint's symbolic value associated with political meaning.[53] As the building campaign of the new church

[53] This coexistence of the now politically important saint, (probably noted by the Teutonic order) and the observed economic use clarify that the cooperation of spiritual, symbolic and economic meanings need to be estimated using a more complex model than Markus Mayr did. He confined his analysis to the economic dimension of a church's monetary needs, neglecting to consider the relic treasure in the context of institutional traditions of memory, foundation and representation. Markus Mayr, "Reliquien—kostbarer als Edelsteine und wertvoller als Gold" in ed. Elisabeth Vavra, *Vom Umgang mit Schätzen* (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007), pp. 99–114. Even though, treasury riches were used in situations of need, church treasures were not simple money held in reserve, they were embedded into different constructs of meaning and they steadily produced new meanings within narratives of the treasury, representing the past and reproducing "imaginative memory", see Pierre-Alain Mariaux, "Der Schatz als Ort der Erinnerung. Anmerkungen zur Neuordnung der Kirchenschätze im 12. Jahrhundert" in ed. Elisabeth Vavra, *Vom Umgang mit Schätzen* (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007), pp. 345–57; Remensnyder, "Legendary Treasure at Conques"; Cynthia Hahn, "The

progressed the economic aspect lost its relevance: the additional barriers of the mausoleum once again complicated access and with the construction of the choir stalls and a choir screen around 1280, (fig. 7.2) the tomb became accessible only through the narrow passage between the northwestern crossing pier and the western apse wall—impractical for great masses of pilgrims.[54] One can observe the steady retreat of the saint out of her church, which lacking the presence of the relic of the saint, was replaced by representation through an increased production of images.[55]

This obvious neglect of pilgrims was an unusual development within the practice of medieval pilgrimage. Why should one refuse the benefit of an established relic cult and abstain from the earnings and the importance that arises alongside a flourishing pilgrimage? But, as Andreas Köstler has shown, the Teutonic Order, which started as a hospital order, redefined their purposes at the end of the 12th century, following the aims of the great knight orders, de-emphasizing pilgrimage and Elizabeth as a hospital saint.[56] More interesting from our perspective are the consequences this shift had for the representation of St. Elizabeth. The awareness of personal poverty in a saint of high

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Meaning of Early Medieval Treasuries" in ed. Bruno Reudenbach and Gia Toussaint, *Reliquiare im Mittelalter* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2005), pp. 1–20. Religious treasures were not merely self-referential, referring to more than their bare materiality. Even profane treasures were referred to as an Other, a Numinous, and a Mythical—which is why medieval narratives often include dwarfs, dragons and griffins as custodians of the treasure, see Karin Lichtblau, "Schatzvorstellungen in der deutschen Literatur des Mittelalters" in ed. Elisabeth Vavra, *Vom Umgang mit Schätzen* (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007), pp. 35–54; Werner Wunderlich, "Drachenhort—Königsgut—Rheingold. Der Nibelungenschatz als Mythos, Motiv und Metapher" in ed. Elisabeth Vavra, *Vom Umgang mit Schätzen* (Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007), pp. 167–96.

[54] On the reconstruction of the tomb and the installation of choir stalls and screen see Köstler, "Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche," pp. 42, 76, 61. During the elevation of the relics, a new miracle happened, fostering pilgrimage obviously for the last time: some days after the elevation the clerics noticed, that the relics secreted curative oil. The date of the miracle could not be more appropriate because the elevation abolished the connection of tomb and relic and the control on the relics was strictly regulated by the clerics. The oil miracle substituted the pilgrims' lack of contact with a substance, which could, as compensation, be sold or distributed. Since the oil's sudden drain in the year of the translation, the miracle appeared to be an ingenious staging of the Teutonic Order, degrading the miracle as a mere economic measure, see Köstler, "Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche," p. 57.

[55] On the consequences of this retreat see Köstler, "Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche," p. 21.

[56] Köstler, "Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche," p. 88.

nobility was transformed into an idealized image of noble countess helping with poor-relief.

The image production at Marburg replaced the restricted access to tomb and relics with two biographical cycles, situated on the roof of the reliquary shrine and within two lancets of the saint's window, originally located directly behind her tomb.[57] Both of those cycles significantly reduced the radical aspects of Elizabeth's piety, recalling instead her former life at the Thuringian court.[58] The window juxtaposed biographical episodes with exemplary deeds of the saint. Nonetheless, the biographical cycle reserved two (formerly three) scenes for her husband's crusade and even the meritorious acts were fashioned after the Christian model of merciful deeds, omitting an emphasis on Elizabeth's specific piety. (fig. 7.5) The allegorical structure of the narrative shapes Elizabeth into an embodiment of *misericordia* and reintegrates her singular and exceptional lifework back into the general system of salvation history.[59] The reliquary's cycle demonstrates how the traditional type of royal saint was overlaid onto the new poverty saint. Now this new concept of lay-noble sanctity was once more transformed into political legitimization, praising above all the Thuringian landgraves. The first three panels of the shrine focus attention on her husband's crusade, introducing Elizabeth as a mere accessory, basically fulfilling her duties as a countess and wife. (fig. 7.6a) The last panel of the first side closes with her first charitable deed, but since it corresponds with the typical pattern of courtly poor-relief, there is nothing representative of her radical piety. (fig. 7.6b) The fifth scene, showing her changing into the garment of the hospital nun is a turning-point, but

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[57] On the window see Monika Bierschenk, *Glasmalereien der Elisabethkirche in Marburg. Die figürlichen Fenster um 1240* (Berlin: Deutscher Verlag für Kunstwissenschaft, 1991). On the shrine see Erika Dinkler-von Schubert, *Der Schrein der hl. Elisabeth zu Marburg. Studien zur Schrein-Ikonographie* (Marburg: Verlag des Kunstgeschichtlichen Seminars der Universität, 1964); Belghaus, "Der erzählte Körper," pp. 155–180.

[58] This development begins already in the *Libellus*, written during the canonization process under influence of the landgraves, and was enhanced within the *Vita* of Dietrich of Apolda, which moderated all details of her nursing and focusing her life as a countess, see "Libellus de dictis quatuor ancillarum" ed. Albert Huyskens and *Die Vita der heiligen Elisabeth des Dietrichs von Apolda*, ed. Monika Rener (Marburg: Elwert, 1993).

[59] Frank Martin, "Die Heilige Elisabeth in der Glasmalerei. Vermittlungsstrategien eines weiblichen Heiligenmodells" in ed. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner, *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 2, pp. 293–308.

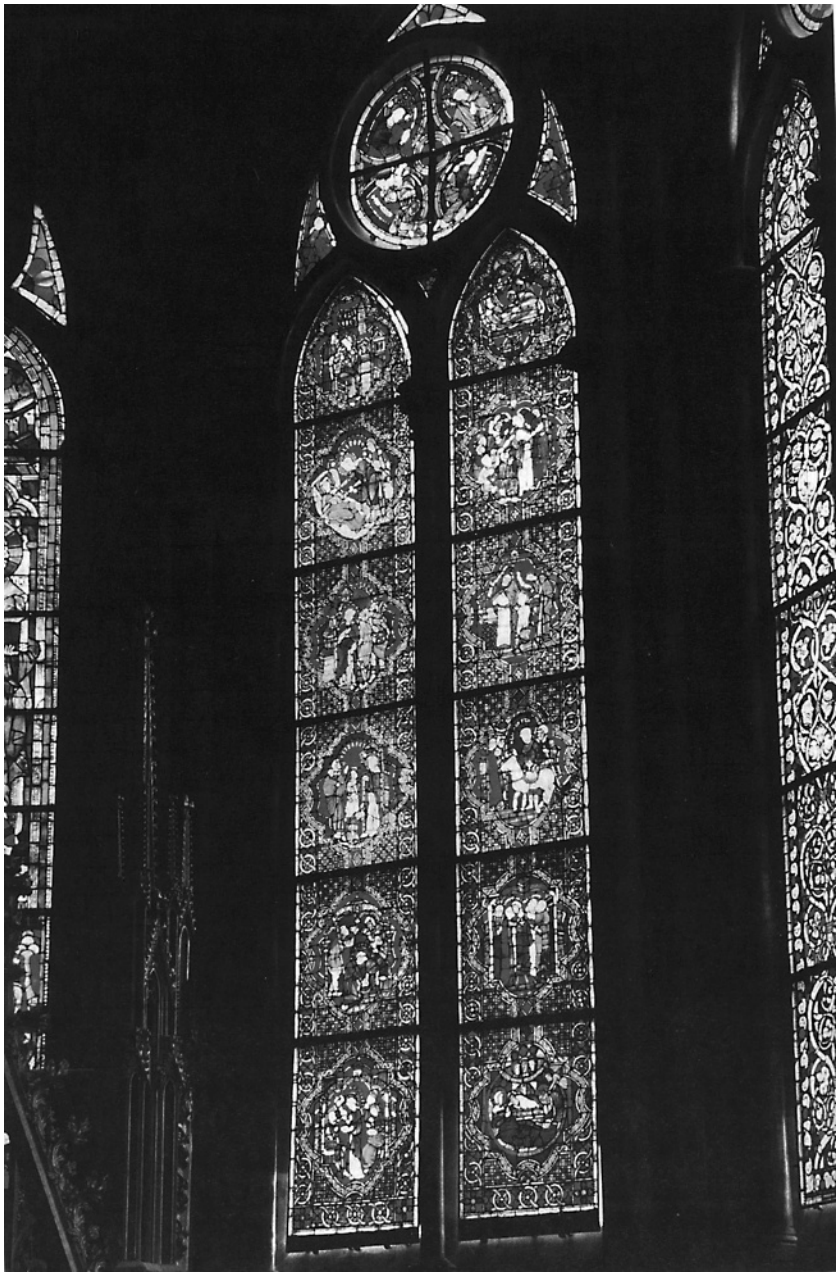

Fig. 7.5 Elizabeth window, *c.* 1240 (Marburg, St. Elizabeth).
Photo: Andreas Köstler.

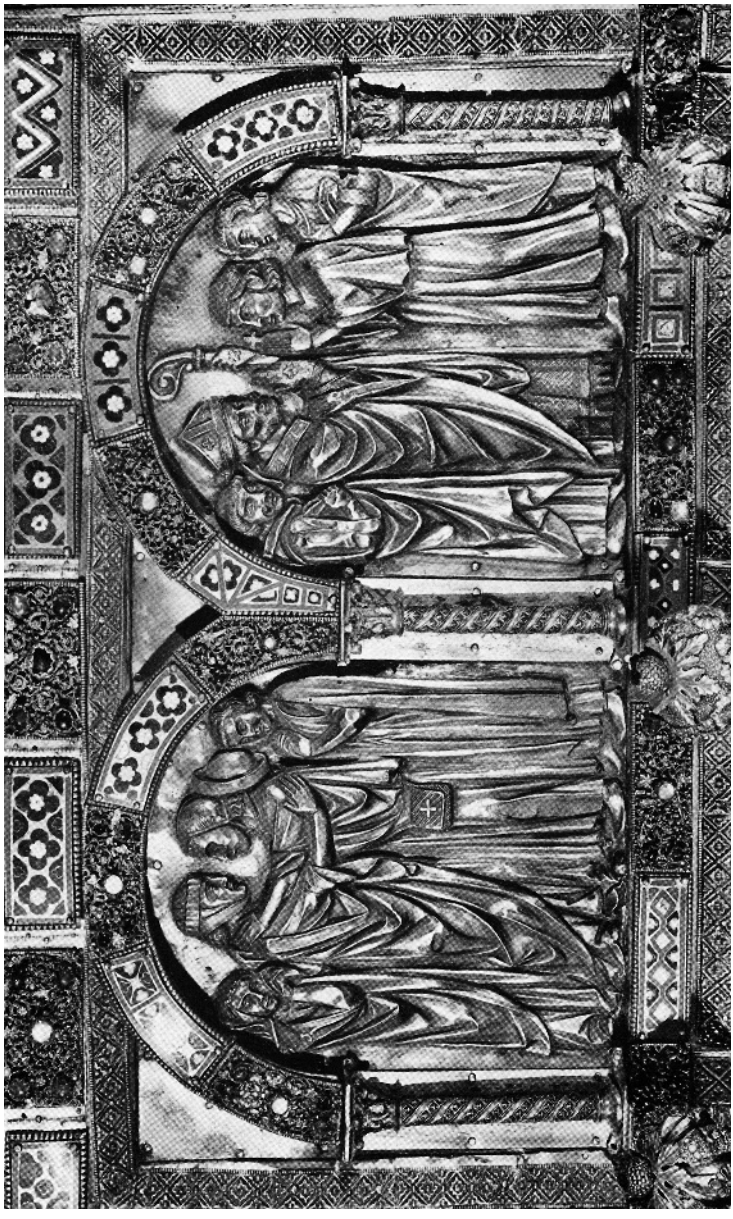

Fig. 7.6a Detail from Reliquary shrine, roof reliefs, *c.* 1249 (Marburg, St. Elizabeth). Photo: after Erika Dinkler-von Schubert, *Der Schrein der hl. Elisabeth zu Marburg. Studien zur Schrein-Ikonographie* (Marburg: Verlag des Kunstgeschichtlichen Seminars der Universität, 1964).

Fig. 7.6b Detail from Reliquary shrine, roof reliefs, *c.* 1249 (Marburg, St. Elizabeth). Photo: after Erika Dinkler-von Schubert, *Der Schrein der hl. Elisabeth zu Marburg. Studien zur Schrein-Ikonographie* (Marburg: Verlag des Kunstgeschichtlichen Seminars der Universität, 1964).

Fig. 7.6c Detail from Reliquary shrine, roof reliefs, *c.* 1249 (Marburg, St. Elizabeth). Photo: after Erika Dinkler-von Schubert, *Der Schrein der hl. Elisabeth zu Marburg. Studien zur Schrein-Ikonographie* (Marburg: Verlag des Kunstgeschichtlichen Seminars der Universität, 1964).

Fig. 7.6d Reliquary shrine, roof reliefs, *c.* 1249 (Marburg, St. Elizabeth). Photo: after Erika Dinkler-von Schubert, *Der Schrein der hl. Elisabeth zu Marburg. Studien zur Schrein-Ikonographie* (Marburg: Verlag des kunstgeschichtlichen Seminars der Universität, 1964).

as this event is guided by her confessor Konrad of Marburg, it appears to be within ecclesiastical order. (fig. 7.6c) Only the last three panels illustrate Elizabeth's humility with her spreading of alms, feeding the poor, and washing their feet. (fig. 7.6d) As a whole, this appears not as a life of a woman who had rejected her status and former life as a noble woman: instead, her personal piety was redefined and moderated, presumably because the patrons did not want to recommend a life, dedicated to radical poverty as model to be imitated.[60]

The growing influence of the poverty movement was an immense challenge for traditional forms of legitimizations of noble power. The steadily increasing poverty during the 12th century required, by social necessity, poor-relief by nobles, for which Elizabeth was an exemplar. From contemporary debates on the religious conception of poverty emerged arguments defending the splendor and status of the nobility in order to equalize the opposite values of poverty and ruling power. As a result, the iconography of the saint was adapted to show different patterns of the meaning of a poverty saint. The pictorial narration of the reliquary shrine, and, less explicitly, the window did not present the saint as an alternative to nobility, but instead placed her within an ambiguous interrelation of poverty and courtly splendor. Poor-relief serves as a substitute, compensating the ideal of voluntary poverty.[61] The pictorial cycles at Marburg addressed an exclusive group of visitors and the pilgrims expecting help and cures at the reliquary shrine were not considered an appropriate pictorial audience.

One of the constitutive conditions for such transformations of meanings, was first the veneration controlled by the deprivation and the decentralization of the relics, second the control on the pictorial programs linked with the saint, and third, a skilled occupation of the thresholds, defining the access to relics and tomb.[62] Thus, the increase of images during the first half of the 14th century is remarkable, defining the boundaries, according to different groups of beholders. The

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[60] For a detailed analysis of the pictorial cycle see Belghaus, "Der erzählte Körper," pp. 155–80.

[61] A similar development can be seen in the support of Franciscan piety by nobles that could replace evangelic poverty. Tanja Michalsky, "Sponsoren der Armut. Bildkonzepte franziskanisch orientierter Herrschaft" in ed. Tanja Michalsky, *Medien der Macht. Kunst zur Zeit der Anjous in Italien* (Berlin: Reimer, 2001), pp. 121–48.

[62] On the visual centralization of the saints' cults within pilgrimage churches and shrines in general see Willibald Sauerländer, "Reliquien, Altäre und Portale" in: ed. Nicolas Bock, *Kunst und Liturgie im Mittelalter* (München: Hirmer, 2000), pp. 121–34.

reliquary shrine in the sacristy was surrounded with a screen, and portraits of the visiting emperor, his entourage and the Hassian landgraves replicating this reception context. Whoever had the chance to visit the sacristy after that would have the sense of a most exclusive experience, especially regarding the status of the previous visitors. The tomb, completed with a frontal relief and a screen, substituted a pictorial program for those refused access depicting the burial of the saint with her corpse laid out with assisting persons in the background. (fig. 7.7) The small figures depicting invalids and beggars beneath the corpse are the only element, which refers back to the primary context of pilgrimage, but their minimized scale reflects their minor importance. These barriers characterize the tomb as a monumental treasure casket, just visible from a distance and therefore only perceptible within a visual mode, whereas the tactile approach and the access to the healing power of the slab, at first limited, now become impossible.[63] The minor role of the pilgrims in the tomb relief corresponds to the gradual decline of the Marburg hospital, which while losing its original function, was transformed during the following years until it became a kind of luxury resort by the end of the 15th century.[64]

Furthermore, the chosen design of the reliquaries document how the saint lost her identity and function within devotional interaction. Communicative power of saints can effectively be improved by using anthropomorphic reliquaries. Beate Fricke has impressively shown how shaped reliquaries of body-parts guaranteed the encounter with the saint; for example, the reliquary statue of St. Foy in Conques enabled an interrelation of the beholder's view with the statue's wide open, gazing eyes, assuring the devotees with a glance of her eyes that their prayers will be fulfilled.[65] However, in Marburg a monumental reliquary shrine was designed, containing the relics within a more complex pictorial system, making the saint fit a model of sanctity approved by the church. Rather than reconstructing the spiritual body as a counterpart for the devotees, the architectural allusion of the shrine serves as a metaphor of *ecclesia* and the imagery refers back to the saint's exemplar including narrative episodes from her life and symbols of virtue and faith. Even the skull relic was not enclosed in a bust reliquary and

[63] Köstler, "Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche," p. 43.
[64] Karl E. Demandt, "Verfremdung und Wiederkehr der heiligen Elisabeth," *Hessisches Jahrbuch für Landesgeschichte* 22 (1972), pp. 112–61.
[65] Fricke, "Ecce fides," pp. 174–83.

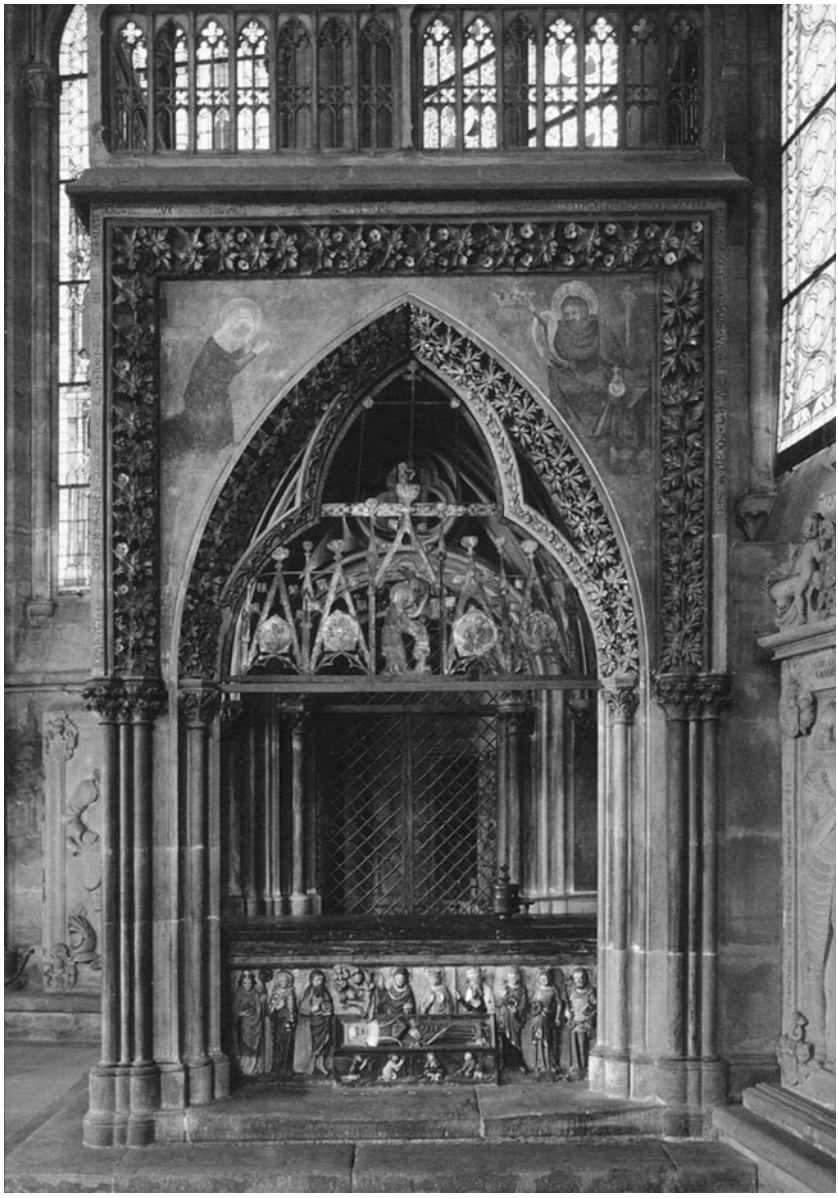

Fig. 7.7 Tomb of St. Elizabeth, *c*. 1280–1350 (Marburg, St. Elizabeth). Photo: after Frank Martin, "Die Heilige Elisabeth in der Glasmalerei. Vermittlungsstrategien eines weiblichen Heiligenmodells." in ed. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner, *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 2, pp. 293–308.

the skull remained faceless. The reliquary instead integrated an ancient agate bowl and a crown as symbols of imperial power. With his gift, Frederick II established a close relationship with the saint, typical for medieval society, where the exchange of gifts captured an important role in establishing and confirming social relations. The gift included material (agate bowl), spiritual (heavenly crown), and symbolic values (imperial meaning of ancient spolia and crown), which all combine to increase the material and symbolic value of the relic. This design was crucial because the symbols of imperial power excluded the relic from popular veneration. Without a reconstructed body or a face, the relic lost its identity as living image and for worshipping audiences it could not be their counterpart.[66]

The relic served not only as a point of reference, where an encounter of the saint and the devotees was enabled, the relic also occupied a space of interaction between the mundane and the heavenly world. As a place where heaven touches earth, the relic treasure could be defined as space of liminality, and miracles, occurring there, prove this boundary crossing to the spiritual world for the devotees who temporarily were set within a liminal status of "betwixed and between."[67] The visual representation of Elizabeth established the tomb as a place of remembrance (*lieu de mémoire*),[68] memorizing above all her earthly life, a notion emphasized by the relief, depicting the historical event of her burial. But by not reconstructing her spiritual body, by omitting reference to her eternal life, and her acting and communicating power, this notion was obliterated. The relics were first separated, then concealed behind the imagery of the shrine, and finally became invisible within the sacristy. For pilgrims the contact with the spiritual power of the saint was no longer possible, a fact that affected the status and function of the relic treasure. Stored within the sacristy the relics lost their interceding function to the immaterial treasure of grace—ultimately they were turned into an accumulation of worth, for the

[66] The practice of gift exchange was not available only to noble pilgrims, for body-shaped votive gifts of wax, emphasizing the pilgrims prayers with a representation of their cured body also served as a gift to saints. Georges Didi-Huberman, "Heuristik und Ähnlichkeit. Der Fall der Votivbilder" in ed. Jan Gerchow, *Ebenbilder. Kopien von Körpern—Modelle des Menschen* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2002), pp. 65–72.

[67] Victor W. Turner, *The ritual process: structure and antistructure* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), p. 95.

[68] Pierre Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire I–III* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984–1992).

material values increased, transmuting the given alms into the golden skin of the reliquary.

We do not know exactly when the reliquary shrine was moved into the sacristy. It is possible that it was presented within the church during the second half of the 13th century, most probably placed on the high altar within the sanctuary.[69] At least before the construction of the choir screen it might have been visible from the nave and although this presentation allowed only a view from a distance, the relics remained accessible for pilgrims, for in medieval perception theory the gaze was thought as a form of corporal touch.[70] The general transformation of the practice of relic piety during the thirteenth century may serve to explain the shift towards a visual mode of veneration. Relics then became visible, for they were often encased in reliquaries made of crystals, and more and more images replaced the relic as representation of the saint.[71] The veneration of St. Francis of Assisi, for example, demonstrates how his unavailable relics could be substituted by altarpieces with the saint's portrait and short picture cycles depicting miracles and other episodes from his life. These were integrated into an extensive image cult corresponding to the status and the power of relics, for these cult practices were associated with miraculous images and originating legends.[72] The separation of relic and image worship was thoroughly disseminated during the following years. The veneration of the Franciscan, Gerardo Cagnoli (1267–1342),

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[69] The original placement of the shrine is debatable. Most plausible is a placement on the high altar of the sanctuary, already finished by 1249. The visibility from the nave depended on the construction of the various choir screens. The today's existing screen was erected in the 14th century, but two previous screens can be reconstructed. The second screen was erected around the year 1280 (the wooden arcade on top of the existing screen was a part of that second screen) and the first, of which only the fundaments persist, probably was erected around the middle of the 13th century, see Köstler, "Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche," pp. 91–98.

[70] Cynthia Hahn, "Visio Dei. Changes in Medieval Visuality" in ed. Robert S. Nelson, *Visuality before and beyond the Renaissance. Seeing as Others Saw* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 169–96.

[71] Beate Fricke made the interesting remark that these new reliquary types appeared after the crusade of 1204, when a large amount of relics were brought by the crusaders who understood them more as a souvenir and therefore wanted to present them in transparent containers. These new forms of presentation originally reflected the relics' altered status from representations of a holy space to mediums of memory, Fricke, "Ecce fides," p. 157.

[72] Klaus Krüger, *Der frühe Bildkult des Franziskus in Italien* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1992), p. 50; André Vauchez, *Sainthood in the later Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 448–53.

to cite another example, was initially directed towards his portrait and a flourishing cult of miracles surrounding this image within the Pisan Minorite Church, whereas his relics would not finally be translated into the same church until a few years later.[73] The new role of images in the veneration of the saints increased through the late Middle Ages and is explicitly illustrated in an altarpiece by Petrus Christus. On the right wing, portraying the kneeling donator's wife, a simple devotional print of St. Elizabeth is tacked on the parlor's rear wall. This functioned likewise to remember pilgrimage and to support spiritual pilgrimage, a practice specific for late medieval piety focused on private images substituting the devotional interaction with relics.[74] (fig. 7.8)

Despite this new attitude towards relics, the relic presentation in Marburg remained unusual, for it resulted in the invisibility of the relics, which can be observed even in the skull and arm reliquary—both of which lack pictorial programs or inscriptions used to identify the enclosed relics.[75] The process of deprivation probably was a reaction to the beginnings of the cult, as it gained back ecclesiastical authority over the treasure Konrad of Marburg had once lavishly allocated to pilgrims' access. It altered the accessibility of the saints' body to

[73] Krüger, "Der frühe Bildkult des Franziskus," p. 52.

[74] The print also serves as confession within *devotio moderna*, a configuration used to prove specific virtues within the donator's portrait, similar to the attribute of the heraldic emblem above. Peter Schmidt, "Bildgebrauch und Frömmigkeitspraxis" in ed. Frank Matthias Kammel, *Spiegel der Seligkeit. Privates Bild und Frömmigkeit im Spätmittelalter* (Nürnberg: Verlag des Germanischen Nationalmuseums, 2000), pp. 69–83.

[75] Bruno Reudenbach, "Kopf, Arm und Leib. Reliquien und Reliquiare der heiligen Elisabeth" in ed. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner, *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 2, pp. 193–202. Unfortunately evidence on the liturgical use and presentation of these two reliquaries is lacking. It is possible that the skull reliquary was presented on the tomb's mausoleum, for until the 19th century there was a stairway to the balustrade above the mausoleum, Franke, "Zur Geschichte der Elisabethreliquien," p. 168. Even less (and more contradictory) information is available on the use of the arm reliquary in the palace chapel of Bendorf-Sayn, which originally was located in the monastery of Altenberg. It was often assumed, that Elizabeth's daughter Gertrud translated the relic to Altenberg, as she was a member of the nunnery. But no evidence of the translation's exact date survives and two inventories of the Marburg church treasure from the middle of the 16th century also speak of arm reliquaries. *Inventar der nach Ziegenhain verbrachten Kleinodien der Elisabethkirche vom 22. Juli 1546*, Marburg, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, Politisches Archiv des Landgrafen Philipp des Großmütigen, Nr. 890: "*item zwen arm mit henden, seindt silbern und ist der ein ubergolt, der ander silbern und haben unden koppern boden*", and *Inventar der Kustorei vom 20. Juli 1548*, 106a Nr. 41/42 P. 15: "*item ein silbern ubergolter arm von s. Elisabeth mit vielen edeln gesteintz.*"

Fig. 7.8 Petrus Christus, *Donors' Portrait*, *c.* 1455 (Washington, National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection). Photo: after Enno Bünz, "Königliche Heilige—Hospitalheilige—Mater Pauperum. Der spätmittelalterliche Elisabethkult im deutschsprachigen Raum" in *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige*, eds. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 2, pp. 431–445.

a controlled regulation of contact. The modified status of the relics was accompanied by changing views towards them. For the loosened relation of presence and representation modified the church's importance as *loca sancta*, where pilgrims and saint could share a common space. Thus, a corresponding modification within the frame of reference could impact the visual representation of St. Elizabeth resulting in a diffusion of veneration and a dispersal of meaning.

Since the early picture cycles deprived the life of St. Elizabeth of its singularity, her sanctity offered new possibilities for imitation. As her real life may have illustrated the incompatibility of *vita apostolica* and *vita curialis*, her reception, however, shaped the poverty saint into a model of noble sanctity, and her noble descendants prided themselves on their origin from a *stirps beata*, a *genus beate Elisabeth*, a dynasty sanctified by Elizabeth.[76] Once more, the saint's importance was linked with her relics, when in the second half of the thirteenth century Elizabeth's heirs intervened the dispute of the Hassian succession. After the death of Heinrich Raspe in 1247, the dynasty of the Thuringian landgraves came to an end, provoking conflicts between the Wettin Count Heinrich III (1215–1288) and Elizabeth's daughter Sophie of Brabant (1224–1275), who claimed the territory for her son. Late medieval chronicles speak of a rib of St. Elizabeth that Sophie should have used to underline her account.[77] Starting in 1252, Sophie qualified herself as *filia sancta Elizabeth* and during the following years she made several donations for the Teutonic Order in Marburg associated with the memory of her family. The new established dynasty of the Hassian landgraves intensified this process, for they celebrated the main functions of their reign and their dynastic representation at Marburg, emphasizing their saintly lineage until the fifth generation. They promoted corresponding images and inscriptions on their coins and seals, advertising their relationship over the whole territory, while using the southern apse of the pilgrimage church as their own funerary chapel. Thus, the saint again was revaluated, formed from political ambitions, becoming the mother of a new dynasty. Although

[76] Klaus Schreiner, "Hof (curia) und höfische Lebensführung (vita curialis) als Herausforderung an die christliche Theologie und Frömmigkeit" in ed. Gert Kaiser and Jan-Dirk Müller, *Höfische Literatur, Hofgesellschaft, höfische Lebensformen um 1200* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1986), pp. 67–140; Werner, "Mater Hassiae—Flos Ungariae—Gloria Teutoniae."

[77] *Die Chroniken des Wiegand Gerstenberg von Frankenberg*, ed. Hermann Diemar (Marburg: Elwert, 1909), p. 218.

the rib relic probably belongs to legend, the legendary increase of relics document the re-evaluated status of those sacred objects, stressing, beyond their pious and sacred worth, dynastic ambitions. This exclusive approach to the saint continued during the following years, when the Hassian landgraves showed a lack of support for the pilgrimage, causing a stagnation of the relic veneration.[78]

At the same time, the model of her sainthood offered a point of reference for different social groups and interests. Franciscan monks venerated Elizabeth as their order's mother and monastic reformers used her example as an argument against the noble exclusivity of nunneries. The pictorial cycles of the late Middle Ages shaped the saint's image into several facets.[79] They appear in mostly nunneries and hospitals, and occasionally the Teutonic Order commissioned pictorial cycles of the life of Elizabeth for their churches. Members of high nobility also emphasized their kinship to Elizabeth. An overview of different pictorial programs related to Elizabeth's life demonstrates that no canonical hagiographic cycle was fashioned, a process, which was characteristic of the text and image formation of St. Francis, the other important poverty saint.[80] During the papal efforts to institutionalize the movements of poverty, San Francesco in Assisi was confirmed as central church of the Franciscan Order, and here an exemplary hagiographic cycle within the fresco decoration was established, codifying a stock iconography followed by nearly every cycle.[81] Compared with this, the images related to the iconography of St. Elizabeth presented

[78] Werner, "Mater Hassiae—Flos Ungariae—Gloria Teutoniae," p. 486. On the funerary chapel of the Hassian landgraves see Joan A. Holladay, "Die Elisabethkirche als Begräbnisstätte. Anfänge" in ed. Udo Arnold and Heinz Liebing, *Elisabeth, der deutsche Orden und ihre Kirche. Festschrift zur 700jährigen Wiederkehr der Weihe der Elisabethkirche Marburg 1983* (Marburg: Elwert, 1983), pp. 323–38; Köstler, "Die Ausstattung der Marburger Elisabethkirche," pp. 133–75.

[79] Dieter Blume, Grit Jacobs and Anette Kindler, "Wechselnde Blickwinkel. Die Bildzyklen der heiligen Elisabeth vor der Reformation" in ed. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner, *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 2, pp. 271–92; Enno Bünz, "Königliche Heilige—Hospitalheilige—Mater Pauperum. Der spätmittelalterliche Elisabethkult im deutschsprachigen Raum" in ed. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner, *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 2, pp. 431–45.

[80] Dieter Blume, *Wandmalerei als Ordenspropaganda. Bildprogramme im Chorbereich franziskanischer Konvente Italiens bis zur Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Worms: Werner, 1983); Krüger, "Der frühe Bildkult des Franziskus"; Ruth Wolff, *Der heilige Franziskus in Schriften und Bildern des 13. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1996).

[81] Hans Belting, *Die Oberkirche von San Francesco in Assisi. Ihre Dekoration als Aufgabe und die Genese einer neuen Wandmalerei* (Berlin: Gebr. Mann, 1977), p. 17.

far more options of various motifs, grouped together into different main foci over and over again. So scenes of Elizabeth nursing were especially attractive for picture cycles within hospitals, while those that included extensive cycles of her childhood or her life as wife to Landgrave Ludwig IV (1200–1227) reflected specific interests of noble patrons.[82] More seldom they were used in other institutional contexts such as in the chapel of the Holy-Spirit-Hospital in Lübeck (probably commissioned by the council of Lübeck). Even though an expressed focus on Elizabeth's nursing would be more appropriate for a hospital, the cycle instead emphasized her childhood and courtly life, with only two of twenty scenes depicting her in service to the poor. The stupendous naturalism of the paintings focused on rendering precious materials, different types of cloth and drapery, weapons and armors, reflects the merchants' viewpoint, equipping Elizabeth's world with all kinds of luxury goods. During the high and late Middle Ages, Lübeck became one of the most important trade cities in northern Germany and the council might have used this focus to express a mode of self-fashioning and self representation. Furthermore, the young bride's journey to the landgraves' court (extended over two scenes) pictures a similar focus. The two chariots carrying Elizabeth and her dowry, the wavy landscape, dark forests in the background and wild animals in

[82] When noble patrons used the saint for more than just a reference to their own sanctified lineage, they emphasized Elizabeth's life and work, recommending it as a role-model of how pious noble women should live. Within this usage, the specific details of her poverty were moderated and the scenes present poor-relief within the usual framework of lay noble piety. Andreas Bräm, "Fratrum Minorum Mater. Heiligenbilder als Angleichung und zum Patronat in Frankreich und Flandern und in der Anjou-Hofkunst Neapels" in ed. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner, *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 2, pp. 309–24. One of the few exceptions is a Castilian manuscript, presumably written at the court of Alfonso X (1221–1284), which contains besides songs and readings from the liturgy of the Elizabeth feast, a picture cycle, where detailed images of Elizabeth work and piety were included. Although these scenes were combined with a depiction of Elizabeth's courtly life, the painters used backgrounds of different colors to separate the courtly space clearly from her pious work, see Dieter Blume and Diana Joneitis, "Eine Elisabeth-Handschrift vom Hof Königs Alfons' X. von Kastilien" in ed. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner, *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 2, pp. 325–39. On the early modern veneration see David Ganz, "Eine Heilige mit großer Garderobe. Elisabeth-Bilder im konfessionellen Zeitalter" in ed. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner, *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 2, pp. 467–84; Cordula Bischoff, "Rollenmodelle der frühen Neuzeit. Fürstliche Selbstdarstellung im Bild der Elisabeth von Thüringen" in ed. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner, *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 2, pp. 485–95.

the foreground illustrate the troubles and dangers of journeys. The dowry's chariot which carries an exquisite piece of furniture covered with a draped cloth, might describe the conditions of medieval trade. (fig. 7.9) Until now, researchers have paid little attention to this picture cycle and therefore we can only assume the patrons' interests and we know even less about the beholders' views.

Although these examples show that the imagery linked to the saint had a flexible and enigmatic character, the construction of sanctity was determined neither by the context of the hospital donation nor by pilgrimage, and therefore reflected different conceptions of sainthood. This variability within the construction of sanctity resulted from the Teutonic Order's indifferent attitude towards the saint and from their lack of commitment to developing the saint's veneration into a major pilgrimage site at Marburg. The renouncement of pilgrimage caused a loss of control of the imagery of St. Elizabeth because no canonic hagiographic cycle, sanctioned and affirmed by miracle stories was made available, making various modes of veneration possible. Furthermore, the imagery and veneration was no longer conditioned by her specific piety. Her life amongst the poor, which was restaged with her dead body and tomb amongst the pilgrims, lost its relevance because within the picture cycles no depictions of miracles or healings were adapted, which referred to the pilgrimage site and the importance of visiting her tomb and relics. While Konrad of Marburg initially staged the relics as a public treasure, their succeeding deprivation from the hub of pilgrimage diminished the saints' sacral presence in Marburg and restrained devotional interaction—rejecting the veneration lived and recognized by simple people. Once pilgrimage was altered from a mass movement to a private devotion of nobles and the invisible saint was no longer a helpful and appealing counterpart, Elizabeth lost her miracle-working and healing power.[83]

Forbidden relics, lost sanctity and the patron saint

During the Reformation, the Hassian dynasty again modified their relationship to their holy foremother, transforming yet again the mode of veneration in a fundamental manner. The conversion of Landgrave

[83] Even the healing power of St. Elizabeth now became a matter of private interaction, when a coat relic of Elizabeth was given to women of the Thuringian and Hassian dynasty to ease their childbirth. Demandt, "Verfremdung und Wiederkehr," p. 140.

Fig. 7.9 Elizabeth journey to the Thuringian court, *c.* 1440 (Holy-Ghost-Hospital, Lübeck). Photo: author.

Philipp (1504–1567) to the reformed church implied another considerable break to relics and cult, but did not result in the complete rejection of the saint as dynastic patron. In 1539 Philipp managed to pry open the sacristy and removed the relics from the reliquary shrine, to prevent further idolatry in his territories.[84] This event caused the final loss of the relics and even though, in that period, relics achieved again an altered status as desired objects in curiosity cabinets, even for nobles, who clung to Catholic Church, they were lost.[85] Yet the con-

[84] Franke, "Zur Geschichte der Elisabethreliquien," p. 169.

[85] During the late Middle Ages relics were included in private collections, which again altered their status and their modes of perception. Within the *Hallesche Heiltum*, a huge collection of relics, assembled during the first half of the 16th century by Cardinal Bishop Albrecht of Brandenburg (1490–1545), public presentations played an important role for pilgrimage, but beyond that "economic of salvation" the collector's individual veneration was crucial, similar to the private admiration cultivated in early modern curiosity cabinets. On the *Hallesche Heiltum* see the chapter "Gnade aus Gold und Gebein" in ed. Thomas Schauerte, *Der Kardinal Albrecht von Brandenburg. Renaissancefürst und Mäzen* (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2006), pp. 67–112 and Kerstin Merkel, "Die Reliquien von Halle und Wittenberg. Ihre Heiltumsbücher und Inszenierung" in ed. Andreas Tacke, *Cranach—Meisterwerke auf Vorrat. Die Erlanger Handzeichnungen der Universitätsbibliothek* (München: Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen-Nürnberg, 1994), pp. 37–50. Other enthusiastic collectors of relics were Jean de Berry (1330–1416), whose collection also contained ancient gems and cameos, Ludwig XI of France (1423–1483), who kept up comprehensive correspondence with other collectors discussing the acquisition of rare relics, and the Saxon elector Friedrich the Wise (1463–1525), who commissioned an inventory of his collection that listed relics. Their inclusion into collections of ancient stones and other valuable objects meant a distinct revaluation of relics, because from sacred objects they were transformed into a collector's piece and an agent of social distinction. Furthermore systematic inventories grouping together the varied items of a collection into symbolic representations of natural and social order marked a particular difference between treasuries and curiosity cabinets, for the treasuries' main purpose of accumulation was transcended into selective strategies of collecting. On relic compilations as early form of collections see Krzysztof Pomian, *Der Ursprung des Museums. Vom Sammeln* (Berlin: Wagenbach, 1988), p. 30 and Bernhard von Hülsen, "Werte wandeln. Die Praxis des Sammelns zwischem kulturellem Archiv und profanem Raum," *Zeitschrift für Volkskunde* 99 (2003), pp. 215–36, on early modern curiosity cabinets see Horst Bredekamp, *Antikensehnsucht und Maschinenglauben. Die Geschichte der Kunstkammern und die Zukunft der Kunstgeschichte* (Berlin: Wagenbach, 2002), on pictorial reproductions of relics and relic collections, including both influences from the traditional use of pilgrim badges and the new cultural practice of collecting see Philippe Cordez, "Reliquien und ihre Bilder: Zur Ablassvermittlung und Bildproduktion im Spätmittelalter" in ed. Kristin Marek *et al., Bild und Körper im Mittelalter* (München: Fink, 2006), pp. 273–86 and on the various developments accompanying and anticipating the transformation from treasure to collection see Pierre-Alain Mariaux, "Trésor et collection. Le sort des curiosités naturelles dans les trésors d'église auteur de 1200" in ed. Lucas Burkart, Philippe Cordez, Pierre-Alain Mariaux and Yann Potin, *Le trésor au Moyen Âge. Questions et perspectives de recherche / Der Schatz im Mittelalter. Fragestellungen*

Fig. 7.10 Philipp Soldan, so-called Philippstein, *c.* 1542 (Haina, former Monastic church). Photo: after Thomas Fuchs, "'Von blinder und übertriebener Verehrung' zu 'gemäßigter Ehrfurcht'. Die heilige Elisabeth im protestantischen Hessen." *Mitteilungen des Oberhessischen Geschichtsvereins Gießen* 85 (2000), pp. 171–192.

tinuation of referring to the saint became obvious when only few years later Philipp was portrayed together with Elizabeth on the *Philippstein*, a former altar plate reworked into an epitaph relief in the former monastery of Haina.[86] (fig. 7.10) The epitaph, done in 1542, was dedicated to the memory of Landgrave Philipp, who had confiscated the convent's property and transformed the monastery into a hospital donation, where the acquired property was now used for poor-relief. The donation of the high hospitals (or *Hohe Hospitäler*) in Haina, Merxhausen, Hofheim, and Gronau broadly reformed the system of social welfare

und Forschungsperspektiven (Neuchâtel: Institut d'Histoire de l'art et de Muséologie, 2005), pp. 27–53.

[86] Arnd Friedrich, "Verbum Domini manet in aeternum—Der Philippstein in der Klosterkirche zu Haina" in ed. Arnd Friedrich and Fritz Heinrich, *Die Zisterzienser und das Kloster Haina* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 1999), pp. 89–97.

in Hassia.[87] Consequently, the pictorial program and the inscriptions of the relief delineate a theological justification for this new concept of poor-relief, linking it with the charitable virtue of Landgrave Philipp. Next to his portrait, in the left half of the relief, an inscription documents his commitment to Christian reign, while another inscription on the right half indicates the donation's purpose, praising, above all, the donor. Despite the violent attack on her remains by this donor some years before, the saint was integrated into the relief and, ironically, being depicted feeding the poor, she now was transmuted back to her former lifework as a hospital saint. However, this renewed focus on the hospital, indicates no recovery of the eliminated framework of her radical piety, for the claim of the saint was still conditioned by political motives. As antithetical image beneath Elizabeth, a harpy with threatening splayed toes cowers on the common casket (*gemeine Kasten*), an institution, which in the reformed territories established to supply the poor and sick, usually was financed by confiscated monastic funds. Thus, the depiction of the saint adapted to the ideals of early modern social politics, was not free of ideological implications, but was emphatically discussed within the field of confessional debate. The common casket proved to be a more rational and suitable system of social welfare than the old, customary practice of poor-relief, traditionally linked to the church.[88] The harpy is clearly understood as personification of the monks who tried to defend their property and privileges against the reformers. The system of social welfare was now associated within the institutional framework of governance, and *caritas* played an important position within legitimization strategies of power. For that reason, Elizabeth was modified again into a compel-

[87] The former monasteries in the Hassian cities Haina, Merxhausen, Hofheim, and Gronau were closed during Reformation, the monks expelled, and the buildings transformed into hospitals (or *Hohe Hospitäler*) where sick and poor people could spend the rest of their lives. Christine Vanja, "Die Stiftung der Hohen Hospitäler in Hessen zwischen Mittelalter und Neuzeit" in ed. Arnd Friedrich, Fritz Heinrich and Christine Vanja, *Das Hospital am Beginn der Neuzeit. Soziale Reform in Hessen im Spiegel europäischer Kulturgeschichte* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2004), pp. 17–32.

[88] Christine Vanja, "Die Hohen Hospitäler Landgraf Philipps als neue caritas" in ed. Heide Wunder *et al., Landgraf Philipp der Großmütige von Hessen und seine Residenz Kassel* (Marburg: Elwert, 2004), pp. 207–20; Christine Vanja, "Anfänge frühmoderner Sozialpolitik. Die Neuordnung der Armen- und Krankenfürsorge in Hessen unter Landgraf Philipp dem Großmütigen" in ed. Ursula Braasch-Schwersmann *et al., Landgraf Philipp der Großmütige 1504–1567. Hessen im Zentrum der Reform* (Marburg/Neustadt: Schmidt, 2004), pp. 87–92.

ling figure of justification. The Hassian landgraves' descendant from this prototype of poor-relief promised a genealogical guarantee for a good and just reign over the reformed territory. With crown and royal arm, the relief depicts Elizabeth only with attributes of her royal birth, while omitting any indication of her sainthood. She was reintegrated into her original frame of piety, but simultaneously transformed into a Protestant patron for the Hassian territory and dynasty.[89]

Here the alliance of the relic and the saint became obsolete. Although the loss of the relics eventually resulted from the particular conditions of Reformation, earlier their treatment reflected preliminary developments where veneration of saints was slowly detached from an exclusive linkage to the cult of relics. Still the veneration of Elizabeth offers quite a different conception of cultic practice.[90] In her case, it was not a revaluation of sanctity itself, which can be explained through theological debates on images and their cultic use.[91] The shift within her model of sainthood depended on the conception of relics as an accumulation of value, which contained the interplay of spiritual, symbolic, and economic resources. The construction of sanctity has to be understood from the initial point of the formation of a relic treasure, whereas its material and immaterial values defined the formation of meaning both for pilgrims, seeking salvation, and the cleric community, enlarging their importance and property. Systematically defined, within the concept and common use of the medieval treasury, the relic should be understood as a medium, linking the saint, the pilgrims, and the community into series of interaction and exchange. The relic underwent a process of semantic revaluation, where bones became sacred

[89] Thomas Fuchs, "'Von blinder und übertriebener Verehrung' zu 'gemäßigter Ehrfurcht.' Die heilige Elisabeth im protestantischen Hessen," *Mitteilungen des Oberhessischen Geschichtsvereins Gießen* 85 (2000), pp. 171–92; Thomas Fuchs, "Das Bild der heiligen Elisabeth im frühneuzeitlichen Protestantismus. Formung des protestantischen Elisabethbildes in der Reformation" in ed. Dieter Blume and Matthias Werner, *Elisabeth von Thüringen—eine europäische Heilige* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof 2007), 2, pp. 459–68.

[90] Norbert Schnitzler, "Von der Fragwürdigkeit der Bilder: Bild und Frömmigkeit zur Zeit der Reformkonzilien" in ed. Frank Büttner and Gabriele Wimböck, *Das Bild als Autorität: die normierende Kraft des Bildes* (Münster: LIT, 2004), pp. 447–77, see p. 470; Guy P. Marchal, "Das vieldeutige Heiligenbild. Bildersturm im Mittelalter" in ed. Peter Blickle, *et al., Macht und Ohnmacht der Bilder. Reformatorischer Bildersturm im Kontext der europäischen Geschichte* (München: Oldenbourg, 2002), pp. 307–32.

[91] This once again illustrates a prehistory of the often stressed rise of the "era of art". Hans Belting, *Likeness and presence: a history of the image before the era of art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

objects, representing the treasure of grace and defining a sacred space on earth. Enclosed into body-shaped reliquaries as simulacra of the saint's personal identity, relics were engaged in acting and communicating relations with the devotees. Their embellishment with gold and gems proved the ultimate value of the reconstructed saint's spiritual body, furthermore added material values and eventually produced a simultaneous treasure of immaterial and material worth, which could be spent both for the faithful and the community. What makes the case of Elizabeth's veneration in Marburg so interesting is that from the moment the relics and reliquaries became invisible and the treasure lost for the pilgrims, the economy of salvation was no longer balanced by all participants of the cult and ceased to function.

Even though the invisibility of the relics liberated the veneration of any ideological link to the cult center at Marburg and thus caused the decline of pilgrimage, the loss of the treasure created new values and new meanings, beyond pilgrimage and its focal point of the saint's miracle-working and healing power, emerged in the subsequent production of images. It is not irrelevant to mention that the earnings of the Teutonic Order in Marburg from the second half of the 14th century onward mostly derived from donations of nobility, from families of the friars on the one hand and relatives of Elizabeth on the other hand, which considerably exceeded the earnings from pilgrimage.[92] The steady rise of the worshipper's social rank arose from Elizabeth's unforeseen career as noble and dynastic saint and was possible because the loss of the relics opened the veneration up for new attributions of value and meaning. Without the obligatory link to the relics, their cultic use and their power to allow modes of interaction, the veneration of Elizabeth became a matter of imagination, which enabled different contexts of reception and a steady adaptation of the saint's model.

Under reversed conditions the revaluating process both of the saint's model and the relics was remodeled and continued during Reformation. One of the reports on Landgrave Philipps' violent opening of the sacristy and the shrine described the removal of the relics as a procession from hand to hand, while the used containers and the persons involved clearly signified their gradual loss of value. Philipp himself took the relics out of the shrine and placed them into a square container with a red damask cloth, handed it over to his governor,

[92] Demandt, "Verfremdung und Wiederkehr," pp. 135–40 and pp. 153–56.

who again passed it down to his servants, who put the relics into a feed bag to carry them away.[93] Even though this report reflected the view of the Teutonic Order, and other reports described the event more impartially, it remained remarkable because the members of the order, who always clung to Catholic Church, noted the obvious loss of value from a venerated relic back to simple bones and consequently during the following years argued with Landgrave Philipp for their return.[94] It is fascinating to see how Philipp and members of his chancellery ignored the demands of the Teutonic Order, pretending that the relics were already lost. Even when Emperor Charles V (1500–1558) intervened in the conflict, Philipp made himself Elizabeth's advocate, using the argument of her own will to refuse any kind of negotiation. It clearly could have not been her intention that her relics were subjects of idolatry (*viel abgöttereyen mit ihren reliquien getrieben, daß sonder zweiffell ihr will nit gewesen*) and therefore Philipp, fulfilling her will, had buried them in a graveyard (*auff S. Michelß kirchhof*) in such a manner they could not be found again (*nit zu sammen, sondern ein bein hierher, das andere dorther zu andern beinen*).[95] Parallel to the relic's apparent devaluation, Philipp used the model of the saint for the justification of his reign and politics, especially within confessional debate, which steadily developed within the German territories from the second half of the 16th century onward. The portrait of Elizabeth

[93] "*…solch sant Elizabeth gebeines in ain viereckten, ungeverlich 5 viertel einer ellen langen, mit ain rotten uberzogenen tamastinen beheltnus, gabe dem statthalter, der reichts furter sein knechten, die tetens in ain futtersack, trugens ufs schloss.*" See *Urkundliche Quellen zur hessischen Reformationsgeschichte*, ed. Günther Franz, (Marburg: Elwert, 1954), 2, Nr. 388 A.

[94] Another report was given by Johannes Blanckenheim (d. 1565) the mayor of Marburg in *Analecta Hassiaca*, ed. Johann Philipp Kuchenbecker (Marburg: Müller, 1729), 2, p. 225 and by the reformist theologian Adam Kraft, who gave a mostly theological justification for Philipp's decision to remove the relics, see "*Urkundliche Quellen*", ed. Günther Franz, 2, Nr. 388 C. On the continuing debates on the restitution of the relics see Franke, "Zur Geschichte der Elisabethreliquien," pp. 169–72.

[95] "*S. Elisabet were ein löbliche und gottseelige königin von Hungern gewesen, die weil aber sein f. gnaden befundten, daß viel abgöttereyen mit ihren reliquien getrieben, daß sonder zweiffell ihr will nit gewesen, so hetten sie selbiges auff S. Michelß kirchhoff, bey dem teutschen haus zu Marburg gelegen, aber nit zu sammen, sondern ein bein hierher, das andere dorther zu andern beinen vergraben lassen*", see *Bericht der kaiserlichen Kommissare*, Marburg, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, 106a Nr. 16 P. 5. Indeed, in 1548 the relics, though remarkably reduced, were given back but instead of being replaced in the reliquary shrine they were stored within a closet in the sacristy and soon even among the friars of the Teutonic Order they were forgotten. Franke, "Zur Geschichte der Elisabethreliquien," p. 172.

at the *Philippstein* in Haina signifies that she became a new model, where denuded of her sanctity, her image could be transformed from cultic veneration to didactic experience.[96] Within this shift, the reference to Elizabeth lost its frame of the traditional beliefs of sainthood and the cult of relics. This loss cannot only reflect the comprehensive cultural transformation of Reformation. Rather this shift began earlier as a result of the revaluation of a hospital saint to a model of noble poor-relief, of the loss of her relics' interactive function and the subsequent loss of pilgrimage, which made Elizabeth's model of sainthood eligible for several kinds of audiences. The pilgrimage to Marburg declined, but Elizabeth's veneration had continued, eventually becoming a popular saint for nearly everyone.

[96] The role and use of images was highly debated by reformed theologians and although within the reformed territories the most violent attacks on images can be noted, several early reformists did not entirely disavow images, but instead stressed their function for didactic use. Cornelia Dörr, "Landgraf Philipp der Großmütige, Schloss Ziegenhain und die Bilderfrage," *Hessische Heimat* 50 (2000), pp. 58–69.

8. THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS: DEVOTIONAL JOURNEY THROUGH THE HOLY WOMB

Elina Gertsman

Tell them, that they have left their house and home; Are turned Pilgrims; seek a world to come	Biù pé marù De galwen benniget Tair guèh zou red monet
John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress From This World to That Which is to Come; Delivered under the Similitude of a Dream*	Alive or dead To the blessed Quelven One must go thrice

Introduction: the Ersatz Pilgrimage

On the tympanum of St.-Lazare cathedral in Autun, a formidable Christ separates the saved from the damned.[1] (fig. 8.1) On his left, unfortunate souls are plucked from the ground by diabolical hands, only to be tossed into the maw of hell; on his right, the blessed make their way into the gates of heavenly Jerusalem. By Christ's right foot, two resurrected souls climb upwards, already surely saved. The two figures are distinguished from the rest by their little caps and shoulder bags with pilgrimage badges attached. Here, then, is an example of the salvific power of pilgrimage visualized as early as the twelfth century;[2] two centuries later, the practice of travel to the holy sites had acquired symbolic power at the same time as it turned, to quote Matthew Botvinick, into a "veritable obsession," which, interwoven

[1] On the Autun sculpture, see, primarily, Denis Grivot and George Zarnecki, *Gislebertus: Sculptor of Autun* (New York: Orion Press, 1961) and Linda Seidel, *Legends in Limestone: Lazarus, Gislebertus, and the Cathedral of Autun* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999). My thanks to Marie-France Bonniec who so generously unlocked and opened the Quelven Madonna for me. Special thanks to Robert Carroll, Sarah Blick, and Laura Gelfand for their editorial suggestions.

[2] For the theme of travel in Autun sculpture, see William J. Travis, "The Journey to Emmaus Capital at Saint-Lazare of Autun," in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, eds. Sarah Blick and Rita Tekippe (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2005), pp. 205–208.

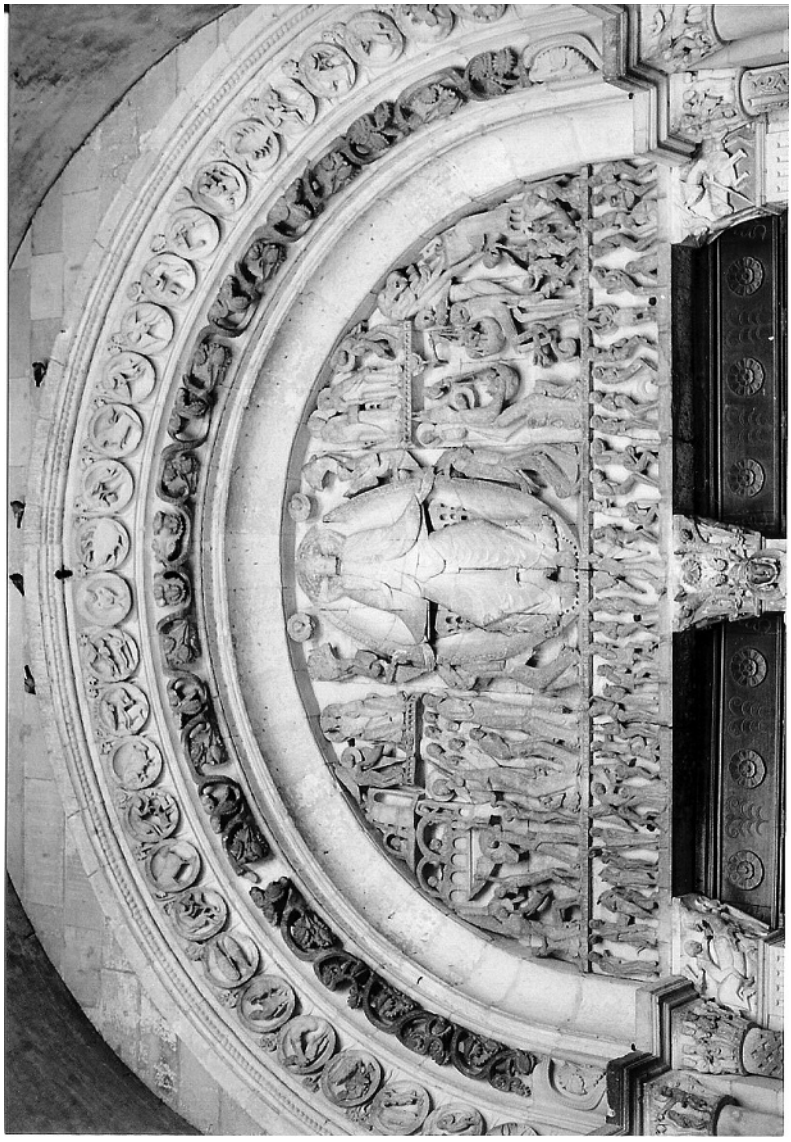

Fig. 8.1 The tympanum at St.-Lazare, Autun, *c.* 1135. Photo: author.

into the very fabric of medieval cultural discourse, "could bring to bear an extensive network of social, spiritual and spatial relations."[3]

This essay endeavors to trace one thread in this complex fabric by considering the pilgrimage performed to and at the site of the Breton Notre Dame de Quelven (Morbihan)—a pilgrimage both bodily and imaginary. It is necessary to point out that imaginary journeys became common currency in the later medieval world, formulated largely as an alternative for those who could not undertake actual travel. Gothic labyrinths, for instance, invited the devout to complete a pilgrimage to Jerusalem both by physically walking their lengths and by actively imagining their destination,[4] while pilgrimage guides furnished detailed descriptions of holy places to serve the public who desired to visit them if only in their imagination.[5] Numerous devotional handbooks—the earliest, a Franciscan manual from St.-Trond—proposed that a fictive pilgrimage undertaken in one's own imagination, which made use of contemplation and prayer, could be just as effective as an actual journey.[6] Meditational exercises of mental pilgrimage were frequently performed in medieval monasteries as early as the ninth century,[7] and by the early fourteenth century they had entered the public domain: so, the author of the *Meditatione vitae Christi* instructs his readers to

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[3] Matthew Botvinick, "The Painting as Pilgrimage: Traces of a Subtext in the Work of Campin and His Contemporaries," *Art History* 15/1 (1992), pp. 1–18, at 3 and 6.

[4] For the discussion of the Chartres labyrinth pavement as the image of Jerusalem, see Daniel K. Connolly, "At the Center of the World: the Labyrinth Pavement of Chartres Cathedral," in Blick and Tekippe, pp. 285–314; further on such imagined pilgrimages, see Connolly's thesis "Imagined Pilgrimage in Gothic Art: Maps, Manuscripts and Labyrinths" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1998).

[5] See, for instance, the thirteenth-century guide *Descriptio Terrae Sanctae* by Burchard of Mount Sion, whose self-stated purpose for the book is to satisfy those who "wish to picture to their minds those things which they are not able to behold with their eyes." Trans. Aubrey Stewart, Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society 12 (New York: AMS Press, 1971; rpt. of 1896 edition), p. 4. It is estimated that about five hundred and twenty-six books on pilgrimage appeared between 1100 and 1500 (D.R. Howard, *Writers and Pilgrims: Medieval Pilgrimage Narratives and their Posterity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 17.

[6] Discussed in Jonathan Sumption, *Pilgrimage: an Image of Medieval Religion* (London: Faber & Faber, 1975), pp. 300–301, rpt. in 2003 as *The Age of Pilgrimage: The Medieval Journey to God*. Additionally on the practice of European pilgrimage in the Middle Ages see, among others, Diana Webb, *Medieval European Pilgrimage, c. 700–c. 1500* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

[7] See Giles Constable, "Monachisme et pèlerinage au Moyen Age," *Revue Historique* 256 (1977), pp. 3–27; and Jean Leclercq, "Monachisme et pérégrination du IX^{e} au XII^{e} siècle," *Studia Monastica* 3 (1961), pp. 33–52.

imagine themselves at key moments of Christ's life, to inscribe themselves, as it were, into the scenes as they unfolded, "feeling [themselves] present in those places as if the things were done in [their] presence."[8] This kind of spiritual pilgrimage was most commonly undertaken to the sites of Christ's suffering. For instance, Ludolph of Saxony (d. 1378) details the dynamics of mental and physical behavior that must unfold at such sites including both the vivid visualization of the events of the Passion as well as "speaking, living, and grieving, as though the Lord were suffering before thy very eyes."[9]

Just as the devout who undertook physical pilgrimages were exhorted to use holy sites as prompts for re-enacting, in their minds, the events of Christ's life and death, so the spiritual pilgrims could use visual objects to contemplate the same events while traveling the pilgrim's path in their imagination. By the late Middle Ages, a variety of such objects, it appears, were conceived to invite a visualized devotional pilgrimage: a spiritual journey taken by the viewer before an image that fragments and reconstructs pictorial narrative into a complex path punctuated by key iconographic stops. Each stop allows for remembrance of a particular moment of Christological narrative and provides a place to visualize the events of Christ's life and to offer prayers. The outcome of this devotional journey, begun by the contemplation of a physical image, would result, as Hans Belting demonstrates in his discussion of mystical exercises, "in the production of inner images" to finally reach a stage that no longer requires any kind of visual environment.[10] Like its physical equivalent, an ersatz pilgrimage, predicated on devotional memory exercises, could help the pious achieve salvation.[11]

Most commonly, the visual mnemonic pilgrimage has been discussed in regards to fifteenth-century Flemish painting, especially

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[8] *Meditations on the Life of Christ, an Illustrated Manuscript of the Fourteenth Century*. Trans. Isa Ragusa and Rosalie B. Green (Princeton, NJ: University of Princeton Press, 1961), p. 387.

[9] *The Hours of the Passion taken from* The Life of Christ *by Ludolph the Saxon*, ed. and trans. Henry James Coleridge (London: n.p. 1887), p. 2.

[10] Moreover, this kind of "devotion stimulated by images" left the realm of mysticism to become "a general practice." See Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 410–11.

[11] In fact, indulgences were offered for this brand of spiritual journey; see Herbert Thurston, *The Stations of the Cross: an Account of Their History and Devotional Purpose* (London: Burns and Oates, 1906), pp. 162–63.

the so-called synoptic painting—such as Hans Memling's *The Joys of Mary* and *The Passion of Christ* altarpieces, in which the pictorial space unfolds as a succession of diminutive sites punctuated by appropriate Biblical narratives inscribed within one unified tableau.[12] Other scholars have linked the concept of the imagined pilgrimage to paintings such as Campin's *Nativity*, the *Entombment* triptych, or the Merode Altarpiece, arguing that the latter, for instance, shows donors in the garb of pilgrims making a devotional journey to a shrine and experiencing a vision at its site.[13] (fig. 8.2) Here, I propose to shift attention to late medieval devotional sculpture, which offers a different way of guiding the movement of the viewer from one fictive pilgrimage stop to the next. More specifically, I will look at the Quelven Shrine Madonna (also called a Vierge Ouvrante), in order to explore the interactive dynamics of such a devotional journey: its departing point, the sculpture of the Virgin, itself a goal of physical pilgrimage; its point of arrival, Mary's womb; its spiritual stops, the scenes of sacrifice; and its ultimate aim, the attainment of salvation.

Vierges Ouvrantes

Vierge Ouvrante statues appeared in Europe in the late thirteenth century, and gained true popularity in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[14] They had a wide appeal: still extant are examples in Spain,

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[12] See, for instance, Dirk J. van den Berg, "Spectators in Jerusalem: Urban Narrative in the Scenic Tradition," *Image and Narrative* 3 (August 2001), http://www.imageandnarrative.be/illustrations/dirkvandenberg.htm (accessed April, 2009), np; or Vida J. Hull, "Spiritual Pilgrimage in the Paintings of Hans Memling," in Blick and Tekippe, pp. 29–50. Hull discusses precedents for such a succession of narrative spaces, found frequently in tapestries and illuminated manuscripts. See her article for bibliography on both images.

[13] Botvinick, pp. 1–19.

[14] Surveys of Shrine Madonnas are scant. The best resources remain Gudrun Radler's *Die Schreinmadonna "vierge ouvrante": von den bernhardinischen Anfängen bis zu Frauenmystik im Deutschordensland: mit beschreibendem Katalog* (Frankfurt am Main: Kunstgeschichtliches Institut der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universitat, 1990). Radler's work refers frequently to J. Sarrète's 'Vierges ouvertes, Vierges ouvrantes et la Vierge ouvrante de Palau-del-Vidre' in *Ruscino, Revue d'histoire et d'archéologie de Roussillon et des autres pays Catalans* 2 (1912), pp. 5–59, 450–547; Walter Fries, "Die Schreinmadonna," *Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums* (1928–29), pp. 5–69; and Christoph Baumer, "Die Schreinmadonna," *Marian Library Studies* 9 (1977), pp. 239–72; for brief overviews see François Boespflug, *Dieu dans l'art* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1984), pp. 280–85, and Martin Lechner, "Maria, Marienbild," *Lexicon der*

Fig. 8.2 Robert Campin, The Merode Altarpiece, 1425. Photo: IAP, ArtStor.

Switzerland, France, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Poland, and Austria. The statues vary dramatically in size—privately owned images might measure just over 26 cm, while monumental sculptures intended for public display can be roughly life-sized. The exteriors of these statues show the Virgin Mary with the Christ Child; almost always crowned as the Queen of Heaven, she is sometimes represented as *Madonna lactans*. The body of the statue opens along a vertical slit that runs from Mary's neck down to her feet, although several examples exist in which the head splits open as well, or, conversely, in which only Mary's chest unfolds like window shutters. Once opened, Mary's body transforms into a small shrine, a complex triptych of sorts: her womb, painted and carved, is put on display.

The statues fall into several types. Some, associated mainly with Prussia and the Teutonic Order, open up to reveal the Throne of Mercy in the middle, surrounded by painted or sculpted images of the devout at prayer. (fig. 8.3) Some similarly contain the carved Throne of Mercy in the center flanked by small narrative scenes painted in the

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christlichen Ikonographie, vol. 3 of 8, ed. Wolfgang Braunfels (Rome: Herder, 1971), p. 194.

Fig. 8.3 The Roggenhausen Shrine Madonna, 14th century. Photo: author.

"wings" formed by the opening of Mary's body: these can relate either to Christ's Infancy or to his Passion.[15] (fig. 8.4) Some forego the Throne of Mercy altogether in favor of small narrative scenes carved inside: the Iberian examples often stress the Life of Mary in these episodes, while French and Swiss statues focus on the Christological narrative. (fig. 8.5) This latter type in particular possesses a delicious complexity of readings derived from the fact that, by the very act of its opening, such a statue sends its viewers on an imaginary journey of sorts, a mnemonic path of devotional pilgrimage predicated on visual anchors contained within the fantastical anatomy of the Virgin. Throughout this essay, I will argue that this spiritual journey, which functions as the visual equivalent to a physical pilgrimage, engages viewers in performative participation, inviting them to use the faculties of the senses in order to visit different "sites" of this fissured narrative, to venerate the divine, and to ask for aid or forgiveness. This essay, therefore, focuses on three kinds of movement that complement and structure one another: the physical act of the statue's movement, the actual pilgrimage to see the statue, and the visual, spiritual journey the viewer undertakes within Mary's womb.

In her essay on Memling's St Ursula Shrine, Jeanne Nuechterlein draws a sharp contrast between images that "address aspects of pilgrimage as an idea or experience" and "a large-scale sculpture of the Virgin and Child, which often make(s) a visual claim to simply represent divine figures directly." "This latter type," she writes, "appears simply to be, or to embody, while the first type can also be said to be overtly about." In citing Memling's piece as an exception to the rule, and in admitting that the shrine never became an important focus of a religious cult, she goes on to suggest that "artistic works constituting the goals of pilgrimage, that is shrines or cult images, tend more towards the embodiment than the representation type."[16] The Shrine Madonna resists such typologizing as it successfully combines both functions: frequently the goal of the pilgrimage as an embodied figure of the divine, it also eloquently suggests the imaginary pilgrimage that can be undertaken by the viewer in order to achieve a goal loftier than

[15] Sometimes, the painted narratives are reduced to just one: so, within the statues at Cantal and Massiac (both *c.* 1330–50), the Throne of Mercy breaks up the Annunciation—the angel is painted on one side, and Mary on the other.

[16] Jeanne Nuechterlein, "Hans Memling's St. Ursula Shrine: the Subject as Object of Pilgrimage," in Blick and Tekippe, pp. 51–76, at 51.

Fig. 8.4 The Metropolitan Shrine Madonna, *c.* 1300. Photo: IAP, ArtStor.

Fig. 8.5 The Cheyres Shrine Madonna, modern copy of the fourteenth-century original. Photo: author.

the sculpture itself. The Shrine Madonna from the Breton community of Guern is, perhaps, the best example for the exploration of this dual pilgrimage.

The Pilgrim's Paths: Notre-Dame de Quelven

The statue stands in Notre-Dame de Quelven, a majestic Gothic church that dates to the middle of the fifteenth century.[17] From the Middle Ages to this day, the church has been a pilgrimage goal of parishioners from the diocese of Vannes.[18] This is the third so-called "pardon" of Morbihan, a stop on a collective pilgrimage that falls on a particular religious festival, the feast of the Assumption in this case: pilgrims come every August 15 to ask Mary (*Itron Varia Quelven*) for indulgence. It is said that those who fail to complete the pilgrimage in their lifetime will have to do so after their death, slowly and tortuously, advancing each day the length of their coffin.[19] At Quelven, pilgrims are greeted by the majestic sculpture of the Virgin and Child, carved in oak, which stands 139 cm tall.[20] (fig. 8.6) It is unclear precisely when it was carved: some scholars date it to the fourteenth century, and others claim it was created in the seventeenth; while it seems most probable that the statue dates to the late 1400s or early 1500s, the dating problem is complicated because its provenance is unknown.[21]

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[17] See Marie-France Bonniec, *Eglise et chapelles de la paroisse de Guern*. Cahier de l'UMIVEM 64 (Lanester: UMIVEM, 2004), pp. 23–31 on the medieval architecture of the church.

[18] On Breton pilgrimages and pardons, and specifically on the place of Quelven in these journeys, see Amédée Guillotin de Corson, *Les pardons et pèlerinages de Basse-Bretagne* (Rennes: Plihon et Hervé, 1898), p. 215; J. Le Trouher, *Notre-Dame de Quelven, chapelle et pèlerinage* (Vannes: Lafolye frères, 1901); and, most recently, André Cariou and Philippe Le Stum, *Pardons et pelèrinages de Bretagne* (Rennes: Ouest-France, 1997). This was the third pardon of Morbihan after Sainte-Anne-d'Auray and Notre-Dame du Roncier in Josselin. The Quelven indulgence was granted by Pope Nicholas V in 1451.

[19] Bonniec, 23. This is similar to the most famous Breton 548–kilometer pilgrimage, the Tro Breiz, which, for the inhabitants of Brittany, rivaled those to Jerusalem and Rome. The pilgrimage spans the tombs of seven bishops who founded Brittany; those who did not go during their lifetime had to complete the journey after their death, again advancing only the length of their coffin, only not each day but every seven years.

[20] On the Quelven Madonna, see Radler, pp. 62–63, 224–226, cat. #6, figs. 13–14; Bonniec, pp. 36–51; Baumer, p. 252, figs. 15–16; Fries, p. 35, figs. 17–18; and Sarrète, pp. 49–51.

[21] Georges Boulestreau in Bonniec, pp. 37–38, reviews different dating possibilities.

Fig. 8.6 The Quelven Shrine Madonna, closed. Photo: author.

Mary holds a staff and supports the standing Christ Child on her left knee. The Child carries a cross-topped orb in his left hand, and blesses with his right. Both figures are refined, with sharply delineated arched eyebrows, fine narrow noses and thin pursed lips. During festivities, both Mary and Christ are dressed in white brocaded garments; the statue is taken outside of the church and carried in the procession, at the end of which it is opened.[22] (fig. 8.7) Like the pilgrimage, this, too, is clearly the heritage of the Middle Ages: a document from Durham, which describes the now-destroyed Shrine Madonna that stood atop the altar at the local monastic church, notes that the statue, which remained otherwise closed, was opened on special feast days.[23]

Within, the body of the Quelven Madonna is divided into multiple compartments that contain, altogether, seven separate episodes; the relief within the interior clearly has been carved by a different sculptor.[24] The top six compartments are dedicated to the Last Judgment: in the middle, Christ, flanked by Mary and St Anne, reigns over the resurrection of the dead, while in the side scenes, angels carry instruments of martyrdom and blow trumpets. Six episodes from Christ's Passion are carved below: in the "wings" formed by Mary's opened body, the Flagellation and the Deposition in one register, the Three Marys at the Tomb and the Harrowing of Hell in another; in the middle, the Crucifixion is placed above the *Noli me tangere.* Four small additional figures are carved into the spandrels formed by the arched scenes of the Resurrection of the Dead and the Crucifixion: two trumpeting angels and the angels carrying the sun and the moon. One must note the prominent place of women in these scenes: missing only from the Flagellation narrative, they consistently appear as witnesses to Christ's death and resurrection. Conspicuously, both *Noli me tangere* and the Holy Women at the Tomb episodes are present, and, even more remarkably, St. Anne takes St. John's place in the Last

[22] This is one of only four yearly occasions. Others are the first Sunday of May (Mary's month), the eve of the Assumption day, and the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary.

[23] *A description or breife declaration of all the ancient monuments, rites, and customes belonginge or beinge within the monastical church of Durham before the suppression. Written in 1593*, ed. James Raine (London: J.B. Nichols and Son, 1842), p. 6.

[24] An unlikely hypothesis that the statue was carved in Cologne and subsequently transported to Brittany where its interior was carved was postulated by Radler, pp. 62–63, 226.

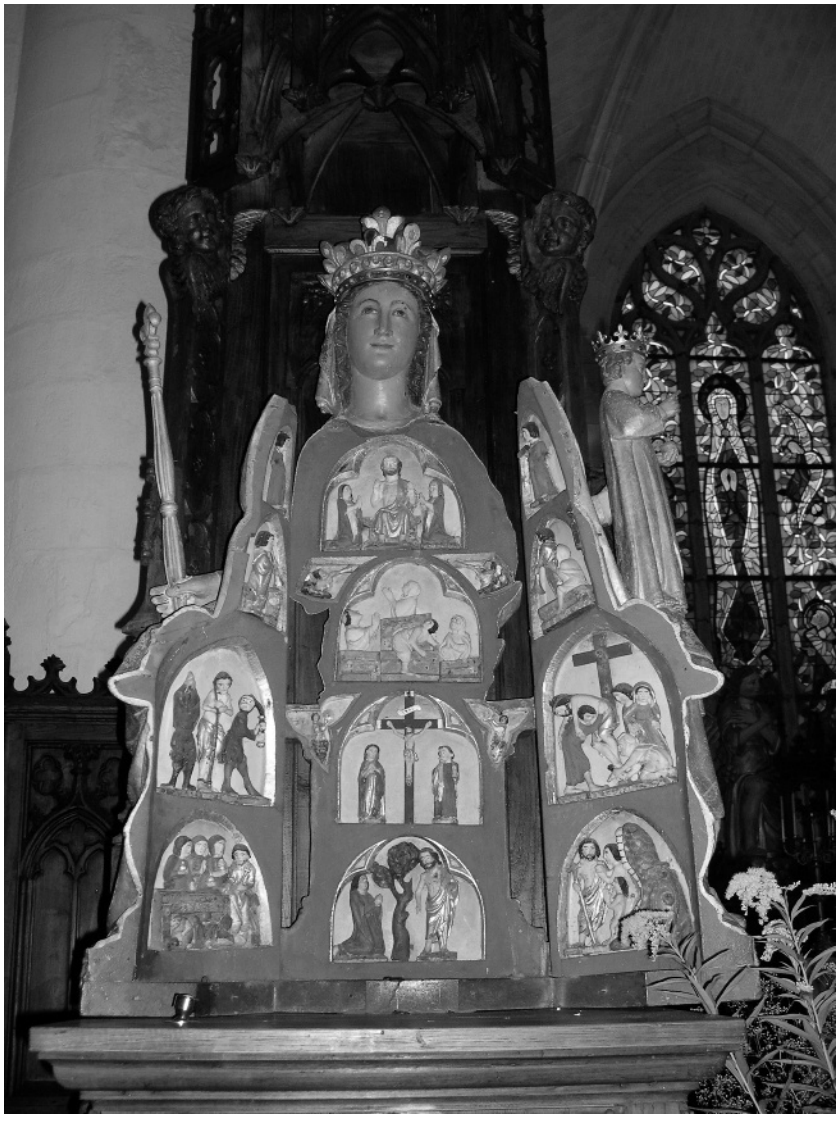

Fig. 8.7 The Quelven Shrine Madonna, opened. Photo: author.

Judgment scene. The Shrine Madonna was clearly conceived to appeal to a female audience.

The interior images do not form a coherent narrative, but instead provide a pictorial map for the visual journey. Before the statue, the traveling pilgrims come to a standstill, while the opening of the Vierge Ouvrante prompts them to commence a different kind of movement, of a spiritual kind. The viewer begins this journey in the middle register, with the scene of the Flagellation. (fig. 8.8) Like other episodes, this scene is carved into a shallow arched niche outlined in gold; the lack of a background of any kind focuses the beholder's attention on the scene, reduced to its essentials. In this configuration, the Quelven episodes are reminiscent of late medieval *Andachtsbild* sculptures, such as the famous Rhenish Christ with St. John (*c*. 1330–40, fig. 8.9), which isolates the figures of Christ and his beloved disciple from the rest of the Last Supper scene in order to increase the emotive power evoked by Christ's words: "One of you will betray me" and John's reaction of weeping upon Christ's chest (John 13:23).[25] The sculpture, which originally belonged to a nun of the (former) Dominican convent at Adelhausen in Freiburg im Breisgau, was meant to inspire

Fig. 8.8 The Quelven Shrine Madonna, detail: the lowest register. Photo: author.

[25] See discussion of this image in Henk van Os, with Eugène Honée, Hans Nieuwdorp, and Bernhard Ridderbos, *The Art of the Devotion in the Late Middle Ages in Europe 1300–1500*, trans. Michael Hoyle (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 1994), p. 58; Hans Wentzel, *Die Christus-Johannes-Gruppen des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts*. Werkmonographien zur bildenden Kunst Band 51 (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1960); Reiner Hausherr, "Über die Christus-Johannes-Gruppen. Zum Problem 'Andachtsbilder' und deutsche Mystik" in *Beiträge zur Kunst des Mittelalters. Festschrift für Hans Wentzel zum 60. Geburtstag* (Berlin: Mann, 1975), pp. 79–103; Herbert Beck, *Liebieghaus: Museum alter Plastik, Führer durch die Sammlungen: Bildwerke des Mittelalters* I (Frankfurt am Main: The Museum, 1980), pp. 144, 147.

Fig. 8.9 Christ with St. John, Rheinland, *c*. 1330–40. Photo: The Cleveland Museum of Art.

devotional prayer and to serve as a starting point for meditation on Christ's Passion.[26] Such, too, is the function of the Flagellation scene in the Quelven Madonna: stripped of distracting detail, it reduces the narrative to three figures: Christ, his hands tied together, bound to the column, and two hooded torturers, one seen from the back raising a whip over his head, another turning to hit Christ from the side. Because of their positions on each side of the column, and their bent legs, the two men seem to be performing a dance around Christ, their figures forming a macabre carousel of sorts.

The meditation on Christ's pain is the beginning of the spiritual journey; next is the contemplation of his death on the cross. This visual stop, similarly set against a featureless background and reduced to three figures, gives the beholder the opportunity to meditate upon the Crucifixion along with Mary and St. John positioned on each side of the cross with the diminutive figure of Christ stretched upon it. This is the only scene in which Christ appears so small: his miniature body both points to his vulnerable humanity and makes it seem as though Mary and John are contemplating a devotional object, a crucifix.[27] In this way, the two mourners become models for the viewer who undertakes the spiritual journey by means of contemplating a different devotional object, the statue of the Madonna herself. Christ's body, then, becomes palpably heavy in the last image in the register, the Deposition, in which Joseph of Arimathea bends under Christ's weight and the kneeling Nicodemus strains at the foot of the cross in his effort to pull out the nails, while Mary, supported by St. John, turns away. This scene completes the first leg of the journey that concerns itself with death.

The next register, conversely, focuses on the affirmation of life: after the fictive visits to Via Dolorosa and Golgotha, the beholders are invited to begin the second, hopeful part of the pilgrimage. (fig. 8.10) They start at the tomb, witnessing the angel's words to the

[26] The results of this contemplation were sometimes dramatic: one nun, in a highly charged emotional state, was reported to have been raised above ground while meditating in front of this sculpture. See Anton Birlinger, "Leben heiliger alemannischer Frauen des Mittelalters V: Die Nonnen von St. Katarinental bei Deiszenhofen," *Alemannia* 15 (1887), p. 152.

[27] Christ's diminutive size, which contrasts with Mary's considerable stature, may also reference his child self, and therefore underscore the Virgin's role in his miraculous birth—a possibility that becomes especially relevant when we consider the dynamics of the statue's opening, below.

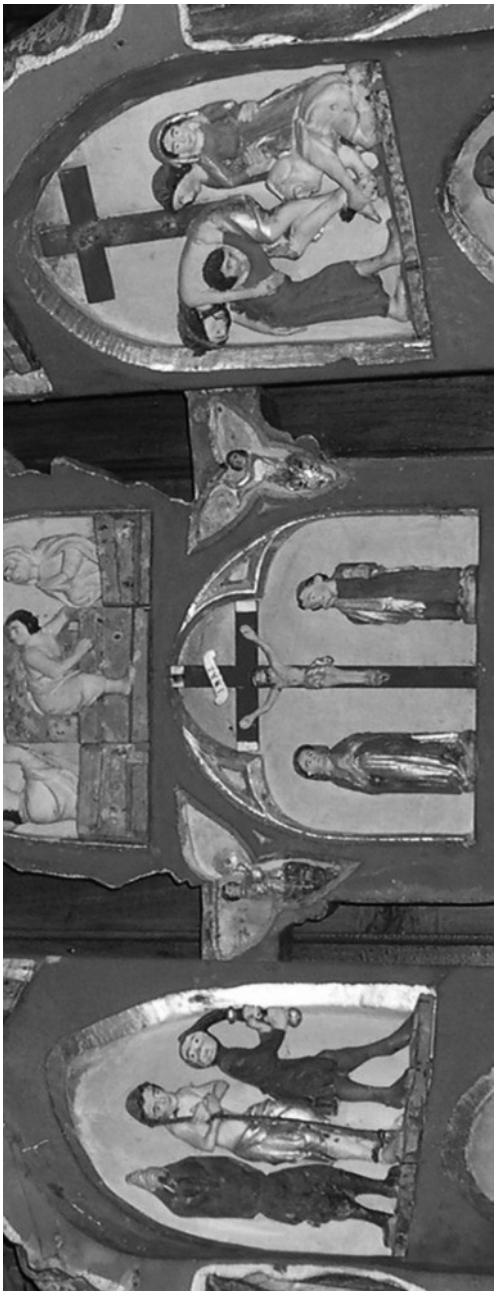

Fig. 8.10 The Quelven Shrine Madonna, detail: the middle register. Photo: author.

three holy women about Christ's Resurrection. Holding small gold vessels filled with perfume and unguents, the three women listen to the angel who is casually perched on the tomb, while the three terrified guards hide below. One rolls himself into a ball, his limbs painfully distorted; another is only partly visible—just his feet and his hands holding his helmet stick out from under the heavy stone of the tomb; the third disappears almost completely behind the angel. The importance of the Resurrection narrative is underscored again in the next scene that details the appearance of Christ to Mary Magdalene. The landscape is reduced to one tree that emphatically separates the two figures, Christ enveloped in a gold tunic, and the kneeling Magdalene dressed in red and blue. The episode in which the Resurrection is announced, therefore, appears twice, culled from different gospels—Magdalene's story primarily from John 20:14–18, and the three holy women narrative from Matthew 28:1–7 and Mark 16:1–7.[28] The theme continues in the final scene, the apocryphal Harrowing of Hell, in which Christ delivers his ancestors from the maw of Leviathan. Here, a giant green scaly head opens its toothy jaws to release two nude figures—perhaps Adam and Eve—into Christ's hands.

The viewers, therefore, have been given access to six sacred sites in which six sacred narratives unfold. As so emphatically explained in the *Meditationes vitae Christi*, whilst meditating and completing spiritual journeys, beholders were invited to insinuate themselves into the holy scenes, participate in the sacred events, become a part of them: "And if you wish to profit," instructs the text, "you must be present at the same things that it is related Christ did and said…"[29] Here, before the Quelven Madonna, the pilgrims become witnesses at the key events of Christ's death and life. In entering the stage on which these events unfold, the viewers engage into what Richard Schechner calls "restored behavior," a hallmark of performance, "symbolic and reflexive: not empty but loaded behavior multivocally broadcasting significances."[30] The constantly changing cast of characters serves as guides for beholding, contemplating and assuming different roles in different scenes. First, the viewers can lose themselves within the implied crowds: they watch Christ tormented, they witness his death along with John

[28] Luke 24:1–7 has two angels appearing to the holy women.
[29] *Meditations on the Life of Christ*, p. 5.
[30] Richard Schechner, *Between Theater and Anthropology* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), p. 36.

and Mary, they grieve with other men and women at the moment of the Deposition. They subsequently transform into unseen voyeurs at two rather intimate scenes, watching the angel appearing to the holy women, and spying on Christ manifesting himself to Mary Magdalene. The viewers are finally invited to behold the release of souls from hell, an image that is surely meant to shift their thoughts to their own post-mortem fate. It is only logical that the last stop on their pilgrimage is at the most terrifying site, a site visionary and imagined—the scene of the Last Judgment, which unfolds in the top part of Mary's body. (fig. 8.11) After contemplating the past, the viewer must now meditate upon the future and its ultimate end.

The tortuous path of the pilgrim is mimicked in the twists and turns the viewer's gaze must make while completing this visual pilgrimage. After the left-to-right, top-to-bottom movement dictated by the first six sculpted narratives, the beholder must journey upward, into a scene of the Second Coming, itself fragmented. There, the dead push away the lids of their tombs all across the second register. This is the resurrection of humanity: in the left and the right niches, angels blow trumpets over the tombs, and in the central scene, two women, a young man, and a tonsured monk rise from their graves. All kinds of pilgrims, therefore, are invited to identify with the rising dead: men and women, clergymen and laymen. Above, the resurrected Christ displaying his wounds is flanked by two compartments, each of which is carved with an angel: one carrying a plaque inscribed with INRI on Christ's left, the other holding a lance, now lost, on his right. The fragmented quality of the scene, very different from the unified images of the Autun Last Judgment, invites the viewer to make a visual meditative stop in every separate compartment. Moreover, the pilgrims who arrived in Autun saw images of themselves, the sculpted travelers, climbing upward on the right side of Christ—there, they are, perforce, saved. At Quelven, however, the lack of distracting detail not only facilitates meditation but places the beholder in a spiritual limbo: images of the saved marching into Heavenly Jerusalem, and images of the damned, tumbling into hell, are missing. Into this scene the viewer steps, amongst the crowd of the resurrected dead, whose fate is not yet determined. Neither is the fate of the pilgrims before the Shrine Madonna: it can still be re-shaped. The journey of death and life comes to bear on the viewers' own destiny, the destiny they seek to improve by completing the physical pilgrimage to and the imaginary pilgrimage within the sacred body of the Virgin.

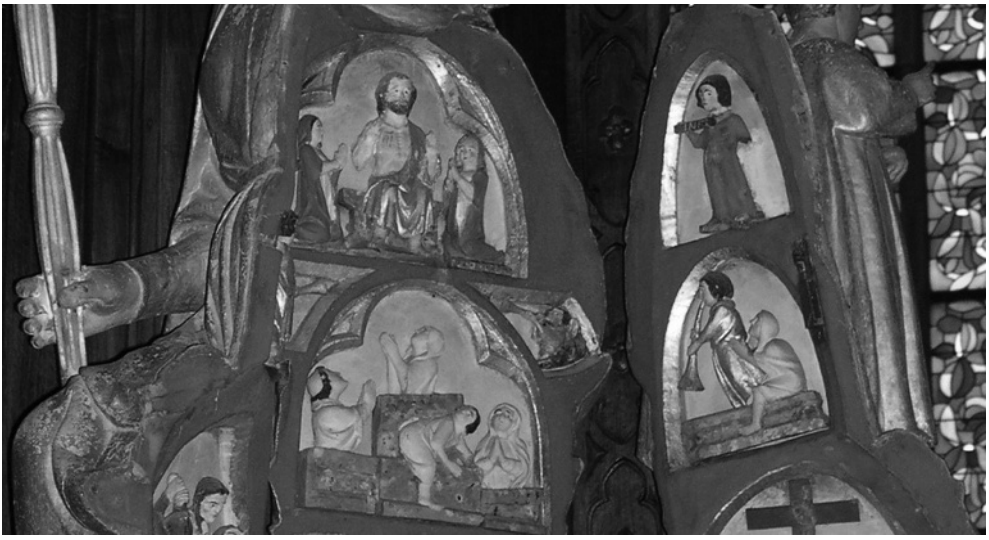

Fig. 8.11 The Quelven Shrine Madonna, detail: the Last Judgment. Photo: author.

The Holy Body

That the pilgrimage unfolds inside Mary's flesh is a point of utmost importance. This body becomes the mediating membrane between the outside and the inside, a kind of threshold that separates and unites the physical and spiritual journeys. In effect, the visual pilgrimage is inscribed upon Mary's womb as the viewer's visual path meanders through the compartments of her flesh. The compartmentalized view of the womb was common currency in the Middle Ages, and, in fact, the interiors of quite a few Vierges Ouvrantes were expressly made to recall the uterus as it was imagined by the medical authorities.[31] Generally, the womb was believed to have seven compartments, and even those fourteenth-century anatomists who were known to have performed autopsies, were reluctant to relinquish this theory inaccurately attributed to Galen. So, Luizzi di Mondino, in his *Anothomia*, claims that the uterus has seven distinct cells, one in the center and three on

[31] For the in-depth comparison of the Shrine Madonna interior and medieval womb diagrams, see my essay "Performing Birth, Enacting Death: Unstable Bodies in Late Medieval Devotion," in *Visualizing Medieval Performance: Perspectives, Histories, Contexts*, ed. Elina Gertsman (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 83–106.

each side—the configuration found, for instance, on the interior of the Rhenish Shrine Madonna carved and painted *c.* 1300.[32] (fig. 8.4) In this small statue, the six side compartments of Mary's womb are taken up by the Infancy narratives—the Annunciation, the Visitation, the Nativity, the Presentation in the Temple, the Annunciation to the Shepherds and the Adoration of the Kings—while the central cavity is inscribed with the Throne of Mercy.[33] Even though the uterine "cells" multiply within the Quelven Madonna, her womb nonetheless carries only seven separate episodes, and the bloody-red interior, which frames the compartments, uncannily recalls the description of a womb by Honorius Augustodunensis who refers to the cells of the uterus as "lined…with villi so as to retain [semen] better."[34]

The very act of opening Mary's body, therefore, reveals the contents of the Virgin's womb and signals the act of birth. Medieval viewers, at least, would have understood it as such, if we are to believe the testimony of the chancellor of Paris, Jean Gerson, who was enraged after seeing one of the Vierges Ouvrantes that, like the Rhenish example, contained the Throne of Mercy within: he thought it visualized a theological error, the entire Trinity conceived by the Virgin.[35] At Quelven, Mary births not the Trinity but the mnemonic pilgrimage path, carved literally throughout her unfolding womb, each separate site serving as a prompt for the memory of the event. A tangible image was considered imperative to set in motion this journey; to quote the fourteenth-century Dominican Bartolomeo da San Concordio, "the finding out

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[32] Ernest Wickersheimer, *Anatomies de Mondino dei Luzzi et de Guido de Vigevano* (Paris, 1926, rpt. Genève, Slatkine Reprints, 1977), p. 25: this includes the facsimile of Mondino's *Anothomia Mundini*, printed in 1478 in Pavia by Antonio de Carcano (BL Cote IB. 31321) along with Guido de Vigevano drawing of a seven-celled uterus.

[33] On this sculpture, see, primarily, Radler, pp. 77–80, 271–75, cat. #16, figs. 51–53; van Os, pp. 52–57; William D. Wixom, "Medieval Sculpture at the Metropolitan 800–1400," special issue of *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 62/4 (2005), p. 47; Renate Kroos, "Gotes tabernackel: Zur Function und Interpretation von Schreinenmadonnen," *Zetschrift für Schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte* 43 (1986), p. 60; and Baumer, p. 250ff.

[34] "Matrix vero est ista seminis susceptrix, intus villosa ut melius semen suscipiat, septem obtinens cellulas, humana figura ut moneta impressa." Honorius Augustodunensis, "De matrice," in *De Philosophia Mundi Libri Quator [1080–1137], Patrologia Latina* 172, cols. 39–102A, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne (Paris: Migne, 1844–1855), book 4, chapter 10, col. 88D. Translated and discussed in Marie-Christine Pouchelle, *The Body and Surgery in the Middle Ages*, trans. Rosemary Morris (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1990), p. 137.

[35] Jean Gerson, "Puer natus est nobis" (Sermon 385), *Ouevres complètes*, ed. Palémon Glorieux, 10 vols. (Paris: Desclée, 1961–73), 7, p. 963.

of images is useful and necessary for memory; for pure and spiritual intentions slip out of memory unless they are as it were linked to corporeal similitudes."[36] At Quelven, Mary gives birth to a set of tangible images meant to facilitate the mnemonic access of the viewer to a visionary realm that finally sheds corporeal representation.

The pilgrimage at Quelven, therefore, is complicated by the location of the path of spiritual pilgrimage. The opening of the statue is an invitation to enter Mary's body and to undertake a mnemonic journey within its Christological cells. To imagine oneself present at the sites of these Biblical narratives, to become a witness at the unfolding events, requires the viewer to visually pass through the membrane of the Virgin's flesh on which these events are inscribed and to effectively inhabit her womb. This movement of the viewer from without to within, implied in the Quelven Madonna, is clearly visualized in the Prussian Vierges Ouvrantes. An excellent example is the monumental Shrine Madonna (*c.* 1390), originally from Roggenhausen, where it likely stood on the altar in a town chapel.[37] (fig. 8.3) Mary is enthroned, holding the standing Christ Child on her right knee; she originally wore a crown, which is now missing. Her mantle is gilded, as is the mantle of the Child and the throne itself, which is decorated with quatrefoils. When the sides of Mary's body part like a curtain, they reveal an audience of painted men and women, laymen and ecclesiastics, flanking the Throne of Mercy. (fig. 8.12) Mary's torso is carved again in high relief on the inside of her own body, while her forearms

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[36] Quoted in Frances Amelia Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1966), p. 87.

[37] On Madonnas associated with the Teutonic Order, and, specifically, on the Roggenhausen statue (now at the Nuremberg Germanisches Nationalmuseum), see, especially, *Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums und Berichte aus dem Forschungsinstitut für Realienkunde* (Nuremberg: Verlag des Germanischen Nationalmuseums, 1992), pp. 24–31; Karl Heinz Classen, *Die mittelalterliche Bildhauerkunst im Deutschordenland Preussen. Die Bildwerke bis zur Mitte des 15. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: n.p., 1939), 1, pp. 118–31; 2, figs. 137–150; Udo Arnold, with Irmtraud Frfr. von Andrian-Werburg, Ronny Kabus and Andrea M. Kluxen, *800 Jahre Deutscher Orden: Ausstellung des Germanischen Nationalmuseums Nürnberg in Zusammenarbeit mit der Internationalen Historischen Kommission zur Erforschung des Deutschen Ordens* (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Lexikon Verlag, 1990), pp. 119–120; Fries, pp. 5–69; Roman Ciecholewski, "Polityka krzyżacka przełomu XIV i XV w. W świetle ikonografii malowideł na 'skrzydłach' pomorskich madonn szafkowych," *Studia Peplińskie* 11 (1982), pp. 253–270; Radler, pp. 96–123, 323–360, esp. 96–108, 323–27, cat. nos. 33–43, figs. 100–136. Radler and Arnold provide further references at the end of each catalogue entry.

Fig. 8.12 The Roggenhausen Shrine Madonna, detail: the pious. Photo: author.

and hands extend to the side panels formed by the unfastening of her flesh. This is a variation on the visual type known as the Madonna of Mercy, in which the Virgin gathers humanity under the folds of her mantle. Michel Erhart's sculpture, for instance, carved in limewood, figures Mary as a protector of the townspeople, who crowd together under her cloak, some looking up at her in prayer, and some peeking out, challenging the viewer to join them under the protection of the Marian body.[38] (fig. 8.13) In the Roggenhausen Madonna, however, men and women huddle not under Mary's cloak but within the mantle of her very body: she intercedes on behalf of humanity by way of her womb.[39]

Here, the images of the devout supplant the iconographic stops altogether, and only the goal of the spiritual pilgrimage—the Trinity—remains. The opening of Mary's body marks the two points of the journey: the point of departure, which takes place before the statue, and the point of arrival, within Mary's womb and before the Throne of God. The transformation of the viewer from simple onlooker to involved supplicant in search of intercession and mercy is emphatically visualized: in this theater of flesh, the drama of sacrifice is played out for the viewer, who is cast as a participant in the performance of salvation. What is implied in the opening of the Quelven Madonna, is made explicit in the Roggenhausen sculpture: the spiritual journey through the Christological sites places the viewers within Mary's body and marks the spiritual pilgrims as her own children.

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[38] On the Madonna of Mercy images see, among others, Nancy Hubbard, "Sub Palio: The Sources and Development of the Iconography of the Virgin of Mercy" (Ph.D. diss., Northwestern University, 1984); Michael Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), pp. 165–172; Belting, pp. 354–58; Angela Mohr, *Schutzmantelmadonnen in Oberösterreich* (Steyr: Ennsthaler, 1987); Paul Perdrizet, *La Vierge de Miséricorde: étude d'un thème iconographique* (Paris: A. Fontemoing, 1908); Robert G. Ousterhout, "The Virgin of the Chora," in *The Sacred Image East and West*, eds. Robert G. Ousterhout and Leslie Brubaker, Illinois Byzantine Studies 4 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), pp. 91–109; Susan Solway, "A Numismatic Source of the Madonna of Mercy," *Art Bulletin*, 67/ 3 (1985), pp. 359–367; and Vera Sussman, *Maria mit dem Schutzmantel* (Marburg: n.p., 1929).

[39] Usually, Mary is shown interceding on behalf of humanity by using her breast rather than her womb; see, for instance, the "Double Intercession" painting at the Cloisters, discussed in Barbara Newman, *God and the Goddesses. Vision, Poetry, and Belief in the Middle Age*s (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), pp. 245–73 and Beth Williamson, "The Cloisters Double Intercession: the Virgin as Co-redemptrix,' *Apollo* 152, no. 465 (2000), pp. 48–54.

Fig. 8.13 Michel Erhart, Madonna of Mercy, 15th century. Photo: by permission from Julien Chapuys, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

This, of course, is only logical: Christ's death on the cross, in the interpretation of Ambrose (d. 397), was accompanied by the Virgin's childbirth labor as she became the spiritual mother of the new humanity.[40] Rupert of Deutz (d.1129), too, formulates the Virgin's role at Calvary as that of a mother who, "at this hour…truly suffers the pains of childbirth…in the Passion of her only Son, the Blessed Virgin gave birth to the salvation of all mankind: in effect, she is the mother of all mankind."[41] The image of the Crucifixion, central to every Shrine Madonna, points to this birth in the course of which, as Saint Bonaventure writes, "the whole body of Christians has been brought forth from the womb of the glorious Virgin."[42] The opening of the Quelven Madonna, therefore, marks both the beginning and the end of the devotional journey: invited to enter her flesh, the pilgrims travel through a succession of uterine cells transformed into sacred sites; their path culminates in the meditation of the Last Judgment; finally, they are released from Mary's womb, spiritually reborn.

Conclusion

Both the goal of the physical pilgrimage and an image meant to stimulate spiritual journey, the Quelven Shrine Madonna, therefore, helps achieve a visionary goal by arousing devotion in two distinct yet similar ways. Holy shrines that constituted pilgrimage objectives, as well as the images that guided mental pilgrimages, excited imaginations and primed the memory to be flooded with scriptural scenes, thereby transporting the pilgrims to the next level where they could experience imaginative visions.[43] Citing numerous examples, Botvinick mentions

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[40] Ambrose, *Exposito in Lucam*, 7.5, discussed in Hilda Graef, *Mary: a History of Doctrine and Devotion*, v.1 (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1963–1965), pp. 85–86.

[41] Rupert of Deutz, *Commentaria in Evangelium Sancti Iohannis*, ed. Rhabanus Haacke, O.S.B., *Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis*, vol. 9 (Turnhout: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1969), pp. 743–44; translated and discussed in Neff, p. 256.

[42] Saint Bonaventure, *Collationes de septem donis Spiritus Sancti, in Opera omnia*, vol. 5 (Quaracchi: Typographia Collegii S. Bonaventura, 1891), p. 487ab; quoted in Emma Therese Healy, *Woman According to Saint Bonaventure* (New York: Georgian Press, 1956), p. 239.

[43] Sixten Ringbom, "Devotional Images and Imaginative Devotions," *Gazette des beaux-arts* 73 (1969), pp. 159–170.

that "it was common for pilgrims, while at holy sites, to feel themselves mystically transported back in time to witness the events of sacred history […] thus," he concludes, "prayer before a devotional image has much in common with a pilgrimage to a sacred shrine. In both, one is set before a material scene, the role of which is to stimulate spiritual understanding through mystical vision."

The Shrine Madonna inspires this understanding by constructing its meaning through a series of temporal and spatial movements performed by the statue and its beholder: the figuration of the Virgin's body becomes fully realized through the bodies of the devout, inasmuch as the viewing performance at Quelven is predicated entirely on the dynamic of physical and spiritual movement on the part of the pilgrims. The physical journey through Morbihan takes the pilgrims to the remote Notre-Dame de Quelven, where they walk in the procession that carries the statue of Mary. A deep vertical slit bisects her torso and signals the secrets harbored within her body, which opens, at the end of the procession, to disclose the complex world painted and carved inside. The unfastening of the Virgin's womb reveals uterine cells transformed into visual sites of the spiritual pilgrimage that beckon the viewers to enter. Their mnemonic journey through her body, then, takes them to seven distinct locations, where they witness Christ's suffering, death and, finally, resurrection. The images, which anchor the viewers' memory and provide stops on their devotional quest, can be visited in any order: they form flexible diagrams of mnemonic journeys, and such diagrams, to quote Mary Carruthers, invite the viewer "to elaborate and recompose […] they follow the 'logic' of recollection—which is associative and determined by individual habit."[44] Ultimately, the pathway from the physical present to the imagined and remembered Biblical past, twists and carries the pilgrims into the future, to the moment of the Last Judgment. This moment cannot yet be remembered but must be imagined. Inscribing themselves into the site of this future event, the beholders are invited to make themselves present and to consider their own fate at the terrifying Resurrection of the Dead. By visualizing themselves at these holy sites effectively located within the Virgin's womb, Quelven pil-

[44] Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 256.

grims transform not only into witnesses at the Passion of Christ but into Mary's children, the humanity she brings forth at the moment of Crucifixion. As she invites the viewers in, she simultaneously gives birth to them, returning the travelers into the present. Transformed, they leave the church: their journey is finally complete.

9. MEMENTO MORI: THE DEADLY ART OF INTERACTION

Suzanne Karr Schmidt

A rich relationship existed between small-scale devotional sculptures and interactive prints in Europe around the turn of the sixteenth century. Late medieval private devotion already involved numerous hands-on practices from praying the rosary or touching reliquary bones to taking the yearly Eucharist. This lay piety clung tenaciously to material objects visualizing hopes for the afterlife, whether such aide-memoires were made of ivory, wood or paper. Fondling, kissing and annotating engravings and woodcuts also heightened viewers' tactile experience of religious images.[1] Devotional prints with interactive components soon began to be sold for use as folding triptychs and as calendars with a rotating angel determining the date of the next Easter, among others. Interactive memento mori prints in particular framed the dichotomy of the viewers' hope for eternal life and the inevitability of their death through the powerful before and after contrasts of flaps and dials. As allusions to physical and moral putrefaction permeated interactive prints and sculptures alike, the small-scale memento mori became both a warning and a desired collectible for the living. From coy *trompe l'oeil* prints of women with flap skirts to explicit paper or ivory corpses, these death-tinged artworks ranged from elegantly allegorical to downright gruesome. It was the inherent interactivity of these mementos that turned them into such shocking reminders of death conjoining faith and fatality that they still resonate with the viewer today.

Memento Mori: Interactive Last Judgments around 1500

Cogita mori ut vivas: Think on death so that you may live. The winding banderole with this Latin phrase is carved into a minuscule boxwood coffin on a leaf that it owner would fold downward, revealing

[1] Peter Schmidt, *Gedruckte Bilder in handgeschriebenen Büchern: zum Gebrauch von Druckgraphik im 15. Jahrhundert* (Köln: Böhlau, 2003).

a chained corpse writhing in flames opposite the animated terrors of Hell.[2] (fig. 9.1) Less than three inches in length, the coffin's astounding level of detailed relief encapsulates the pain and suffering awaiting every unrepentant worldly sinner, while its minute scale destines it for the careful scrutiny of its owner alone. When closed, the sculpture simply seems to be a coffin with a pitched lid decorated by an elaborate cross. A plainer version of the exterior appears in a contemporary Netherlandish engraving from the early sixteenth century.[3] (fig. 9.2) The print's grinning, worm-infested skull implicitly demands that owners inscribe their own thoughts on mortality in its three empty banderoles, an intent that became commonplace in later emblem books. One worm makes this suggestion more explicit by writhing tongue-like from the skeletal mandible to touch (or lick) the edge of a blank scroll. Similarly, the boxwood coffin performs as a personal talisman offering multiple levels of devotional interaction in the hands of its owners. While the lack of a ring attachment suggests this coffin was not worn as jewelry per se, it was small, light and portable enough to carry constantly in a pouch on one's person.

Lifting the lid splits the coffin into a diptych, with an unornamented base to the left and a Last Judgment panel on the right. Here the Saved throng around Christ's rising mandorla as the Damned bow their heads in shame. Folding the leaf showing this pivotal scene to the right extends the coffin even further into a triptych format, and uncovers two Boschian fantasies teeming with horned and winged demons armed with the cauldrons and spikes waiting to skewer and boil the Damned. The central monster on the right-hand panel with his horns, piggish nose and crooked staff appears nearly as large as Christ's mandorla on the exterior panel, making the viewer's choice between good and evil even more dramatic. Finally, the center leaf folds down to reveal the parched corpse begging for a drop of water with finger pointing despondently toward his mouth. *Cogita mori ut vivas* appears on the verso of the panel (now lowered to below his body). With the first letters of mori and vivas brightly rubricated in red paint, the text inextricably links death with life. It is too late for this unrepentant, unnamed sinner, yet repeatedly opening the coffin's many panels and earnestly meditating on their own impending death

[2] British Museum (WB 240).
[3] British Museum (1898–4–1–1).

Fig. 9.1 Netherlandish Boxwood Coffin (open and closed), *c.* 1500–1525, Trustees of the British Museum. Photo: author.

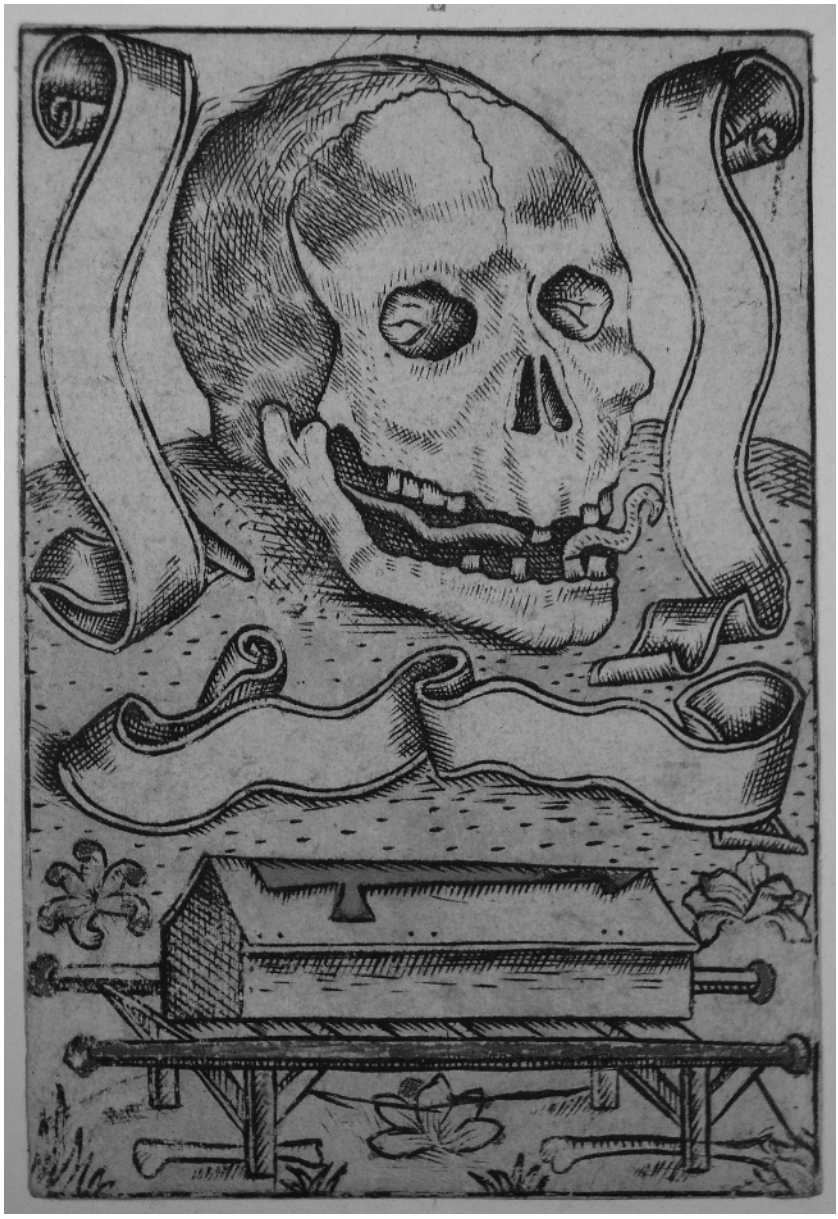

Fig. 9.2 Netherlandish *Memento Mori* engraving, *c.* 1500–1525. Photo: Trustees of the British Museum.

could save the coffin owners' immortal souls. The preponderance of hellish scenes in this interactive sculpture—three panels out of four—reinforces the difficulty of choosing the true Christian path; for the curious who delve beyond Christ's judgment, their fate only worsens as they dig deeper.

A second boxwood coffin at the Cloisters in New York likely stems from the same workshop, around 1500–1525.[4] As such it is a multiple along the lines of the interactive prints, whose construction introduces its own variations to the finished product. The Cloisters sculpture deals again with the Last Judgment, its tripartite folding lid still opening to show the torments of Hell. This coffin more explicitly depicts the fate of the rich man Dives, who chose to neglect the beggar Lazarus in his time of need. After death their stations were reversed, with the beggar established in comfort in Abraham's lap, and Dives chained in flames. In this case, the banderole encircling the sinner's body contains Dives's plea for water as he points to his mouth: "Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus, to dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." While the British Museum carving focuses on the Last Judgment more generally, it too alludes to the captive sinner's thirsty torment with this gesture.

Gedenck offt an das lest urtheyl dein: Think often of your Last Judgment

A unique impression of a colored interactive woodcut of a woman from a manuscript of folk songs now in Berlin also dates to the first quarter of the sixteenth century.[5] (fig. 9.3) As with the coffin's arched top, the album's binding and preliminary pages shield the print from all but the most persistent viewer's gaze. Moving a single flap exposes this hidden sheet as an oversexed female surrogate for the coffin's desiccated sinner. The lightweight, blue paper skirt with its white lacy

[4] The Cloisters version exhibits slight differences in carving style, exterior decoration and text. (Nr. 1986.136) The Cloisters coffin measures 6.2 cm × 1.7 cm deep; 1.3–2.4 cm wide. Timothy B. Husband, *Mirror of the Medieval World*, (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; H.N. Abrams, 1999), pp. 223–24.

[5] Berlin Staatsbibliothek, Handschriften Abteilung: Ms. Germ. Quart. 718: 65. The book includes a print of the emperor Maximilian with a commentary in red ink about his death (1519); this same hand and ink continues on the page commenting on the flap print, suggesting a date of approximately 1520.

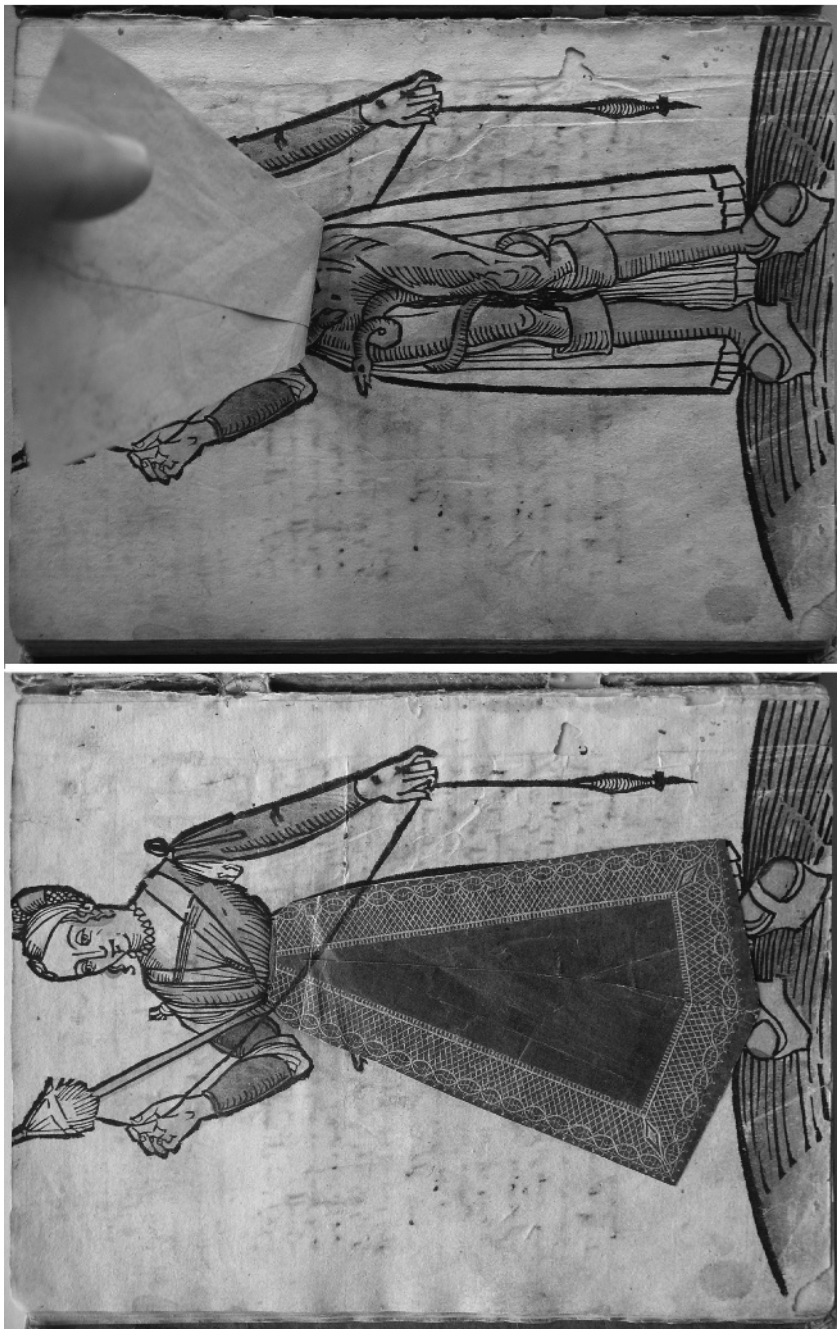

Fig. 9.3 *Spinner*, colored flap woodcut (open and closed), *c.* 1520, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Handschriftenabteilung. Photo: Author.

border glued directly onto the print is probably a later replacement of an earlier woodcut flap that went missing through zealous overuse.[6] This lone woman stands exposed in thick-soled clogs on a hillside, where she holds a spindle symbolizing virtuous industry. Yet that prop is a ruse. She embodies none of the mythological trio spinning man's fate, but the viewer can still glimpse their own downfall when they lift her skirt. The handwritten text on the album page opposite also alludes to a movable component as it casts the figure as a sordid reflection of the secular world:

Die Auslegung der Figur	The interpretation of the image
Die Welt ist frolich zu sechen an	The world is joyous to behold
Das soltu bey mir in der figur verstan.	This you should understand from my appearance.
Er sey schon, edel, jung oder alt,	Whether [it] be lovely, noble, young or old
In ainer kurtz wirt er also gestalt,	In a short while [it] will be formed
Als du mich sichst under dem schurtz mein.	As you see me under my apron.
Gedenck offt an das lest urtheyl dein!	Think often about your last judgment!

Lifting the flap reveals the woman's naked thighs, their bareness further emphasized by brown stockings turned down at the knee. A glimpse of the folds of the back of the skirt indicated in the woodcut behind the woman's exposed legs only accentuates her frontal nudity. Not only are her genitals unconstrained by undergarments, but they host unexpected creatures. A snake's head emerges from between her thighs, coiling jauntily in rakish yellow and green. The beast simultaneously conceals and emphasizes her sex, mimicking a phallus even more suggestively than the spindle she works in her hand. Nearly invisible in the join between the reaffixed skirt and the woodcut, a second colorful snake encircles the woman's waist. The hand-painted colors differentiating the snakes from her body make them all the livelier for the startled viewer. Their garishness reflects an earlier tradition, for

[6] For an earlier discussion of the sheet, erroneously called a drawing, see: Christa Pieske, "Die Memento Mori Klappbilder," *Philobiblon: Eine Virteljahrsschrift für Buch und Graphik-Sammler* IV/2 (June 1960), pp. 127–45. I verified Pieske's manuscript transcription in Berlin and added the first line, which appears in the red second hand.

pigment still survives in the crevasses of some *transi* sculptures in which the stone corpses have been colored to suggest decay. Sculpted vermin were picked out in colors contrasting with the flesh, and their numbers further augmented in paint. For the monument installed in 1542 for Reynout van Bredarode and his wife at Vianen, the worms were even gilded![7] Similarly, black and red pigment reinforces the British Museum coffin's motto; traces of black caked in several demonic nostrils also amplify the overall relief.

Like the coffin's teemingly hellish interior panels, the sexual connotations and explicit location of the *Spinner*'s reptilian infestation recall the contemporaneous work of Hieronymous Bosch. Men and women throughout his Hell burst with winding snakes, as gigantic toads nibble on their genitalia.[8] The fiery torments of the boxwood sinner soften in comparison with this act of psychological shaming and implied rape. As the text suggests, the *Spinner* also embodies Frau Welt (Lady World), a variation on the temptress Eve, who is represented with infestations of similar vermin on her back. As the print instead depicts the *Spinner* from the front, womankind's supposedly unbridled sexuality would not have been far from the viewer's mind. Engulfed in flames, whether literal or impassioned, neither the *Spinner's* nor Dives's thirst could be sated.

The boxwood coffins and vermin-infested *Spinner* both represent the worst outcome of the Last Judgment, and exhorted the viewer's repentance by bringing them face to face with such crudely intimate visions of their bodily remains. As a result, many posthumous portrait paintings and life-size *transi* tomb sculptures of decaying bodies became oddly opulent displays of humility.[9] Interactive artworks on a small scale played into such familiar memento mori tropes as the *Dance of Death, Ars Moriendi*, and *Three Living and the Three Dead.* These ubiquitous themes were but a few of the graphic and literary motifs emphasizing the unpredictability of man's demise, surpassed

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[7] Sophie Oosterwijk, "Food for Worms—Food for Thought: The appearance and interpretation of the 'verminous' cadaver in Britain and Europe," *Church monuments: journal of the Church Monuments Society* 20 (2005), pp. 68–71.

[8] Dating to *c.* 1505–1515: *Haywain*, *Last Judgment*, *Garden of Earthly Delights*, and the Superbia roundel in the *Seven Deadly Sins* table attributed to Bosch, all at the Prado in Madrid.

[9] Kathleen Cohen, *Metamorphosis of a Death Symbol: The Transi Tomb in the Late Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), compares the *Spinner* to Frau Welt, pp. 81–82, n. 116; Oosterwijk, pp. 40–80.

in frequency by only the skulls in Crucifixion imagery.[10] While the sick could have modeled their deathbed behavior as elaborate *tableaux vivants* based on *Ars Moriendi* woodcuts, the empty banderoles of the Netherlandish skull engraving (fig. 9.2) simply begged the user to fill in the blanks. This personalization could entail the name of the viewer or a deceased acquaintance, or even pithy religious sentiments reminding them of their own inevitable demise.

Although the term memento mori was not in general use until the mid sixteenth century, equivalent foreboding statements peppered medieval and early Renaissance allegory.[11] Yet pithy encapsulations of humanity's transience—such as the literal "remember that you must die"—go back to antiquity, including Horace's carpe diem (Seize the Day) and the more festive ode to drinking, nunc bibendum est.[12] In the Christian era, memento mori gained a significantly more moralistic resonance. Memory in the early modern period required training by constantly revisiting the same facts and ideas, and most of all, repetition, whether reciting the Hail Mary and Our Father, or reenacting Christ's life and self-sacrifice.[13] One could not simply remember death as a fact, but imagined and came to terms with it in a repetitive cycle. Seeing and hearing about death everywhere was part of the process. Throughout the bubonic plague-ridden Europe of the late fourteenth century, the theme featured prominently in graphic material culture including epitaphs, timepieces, jewelry, and even toiletry

[10] Hans Holbein the Younger, *Les Simulacres de la mort*, Lyon, 1538; Three Living and Three Dead appeared as frescoes at the Antigny church in Vienna *c.* 1421; while the Dance of Death appeared in a fourteenth-century fresco in Berlin, and an early sixteenth-century fresco in Bern by Niklaus Manuel. Also see Nigel F. Palmer, "Ars moriendi und Totentanz: Zur Verbildlichung des Todes im Spätmittelalter," in *Tod im Mittelalter* (Constance, 1993), pp. 330–34.

[11] Massaccio's *c.* 1427–28 *Trinity* noted that *Quid Sum Eris*, What I am, You will be, variants of which were first used from the eleventh-century epitaph of St. Peter Damian onward, as well as in manuscripts of the *Three Living and Three Dead*, and *Dance of Death*. See Karl Künstle, *Die Legende der drei Lebenden und der drei Toten und Der Totentanz* (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herdersche Verlagshandlung, 1908). Other formulations include *memento re novissima*, remember the last things, in Andrea Andreani's 1588 *Wheel of Death*, discussed below. (fig. 9.12)

[12] The earliest documented use of *memento mori* appears to be English, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, 1554, D. Lindsay, *Dialog Experience & Courteour* IV. sig. Qviii^{v}, Euery day my Sonne, Memento Mori And watt not quhen, nor quhare y^{t} thow sal wend.

[13] Mary Carruthers, ed., *The Medieval Craft of Memory: an anthology of texts and pictures* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002).

items.[14] Whether these referred to a specific individual's demise, or to man's fate overall, they presented a visible, if ostentatious reminder of the owners' acknowledgement of their own mortality. Memento mori prints or other works with movable parts allowed a welcome and newly tactile component to this process, as physically shifting flaps, dials or carvings made each viewing an intimate act of rediscovery of the fatal truth.

Memento Mori: Reformation

While remembrance of death had been deeply ingrained in Catholic tradition, the Reformation in Germany forced a reexamination of the visual dialogue about death. One of the most expansive contemporary texts on death imagery was written by Georg Witzel (1501–1573), a Protestant priest who studied with Martin Luther (1483–1546), but later converted back to Catholicism. Witzel's *Ware trostung… uns Christen die unvermeidlichen not des Tods nit erschreken sol*, or, *Why the Christian should not fear death* of 1535–36 answered Luther's (1527) pamphlet on whether one should flee a plague. In it Luther endorsed moving graveyards outside of city limits in order to prevent spreading disease. Witzel objects to extramural burial, alluding consistently to the need to see death. Death was not to be abjectly feared, but was rather a reality that should be always present in one's mind in excruciating detail. Repetition of this lesson was key and Witzel con-

[14] Cf. Victoria and Albert Museum, the Torre Abbey Jewel, a coffin pendant with a removable lid that reveals a skeleton, *c.* 1540–50 (Nr. 3581–1856); also their ornate "Toothpick" with a skull and scythe from *c.* 1620 (Nr. M52–1960). The Innsbruck Tiroler Volksmuseum has a sixteenth or seventeenth-century towel rack figure split into vertical halves showing both a young woman with a crown and a skeleton. See Peter Jezler, *Himmel, Hölle, Fegefeuer: Das Jenseits im Mittelalter.* (Gesellschaft für das Schweizerische Landesmuseum: Verlag Neue Zürcher Zeitung, 1994), Nr. 13, pp. 183–184. While few (if any) early sixteenth-century memento mori badges survive, Megan Foster-Campbell has located four depictions of emblems of skulls, if not necessarily images of actual metal badges, two in Cleveland (CMA 63256, fol. 184r), one at Vienna, Österreisches Nationalbibliothek (MS 1979, fol. 108r) and one in Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale (MS IV 441, fol 22r). Chaplets with large deaths' head rosary beads could be worn in a similarly ostentatious manner. See Jos Koldeweij, *Foi et Bonne Fortune: Parure et Dévotion en Flandre Médievale* (Bruggemuseum: Terra, 2006), pp. 253–255. For early modern English views on mortality, jewelry and time, see Nigel Llewellyn, *The Art of Death: Visual Culture in the English Death Ritual c. 1500–c. 1800* (London: Reaktion Books, 1991), pp. 84–93, and Oskar Bätschmann, *Hans Holbein* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), Chap. 6: "Portraits, Time and Death."

cluded that a populace that no longer sees death in the busy gravedigger's shovel, or encoded in other everyday occurrences, will effectively forget its own mortality. Like Matthias Greuter's *Memento Mori* some fifty years later, (fig. 9.8) Witzel adapts the Matthew 25:13 prediction of the Second Coming to death: "We know neither the day nor the hour, so we should expect it every day and hour. When we see the sun go down, so should we think of our demise, but when the sun comes up, we should think of our coming resurrection."[15] Always on the cusp of death and Last Judgment, the true Christian needed visual aides to be properly prepared. Owning a boxwood coffin containing a tortured corpse, or gazing on the *Spinner's* vibrant snakes could thus be construed as an opportunity to become repeatedly more familiar with death, rather than as an encounter with a horrifying conceit meant to be exposed once and soon forgotten.

With the abolition of Purgatory, Protestants were urged not to pray for the dead, but only the sick, and Witzel felt that this division from the living was highly artificial.[16] Indeed, he implies that Protestants were in denial about death, and that the reason Luther argued for extramural burial was not to decrease the threat of plague, but because: "it disgusts the 'holy epicureans' when they think of the dead and the bones of the dead, it silences them to see every day the graves within which the stench of death and decay reigns, and to step over them, as if the foul vapors might rise out of [the graves] and anger the thin membrane of their noses."[17] While memento mori prints and small carvings could be similarly gruesome, other genres of interactive sculptures from the recent past mimicked the scent and sights of decay on a larger scale.

Memento Mori in Daily Life

Witzel returned to Catholicism due in part to his need to contemplate death's grotesque deterioration of the human body. This fascination may have been a learned behavior influenced by his ecclesiastical surroundings. Churchgoers from the beginning of the fourteenth

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[15] "Wir wissen weder tag noch stunde, darumb sollen wir alle tage und stunde sorgen. Wen wir die Son underghe sehe, so sollen wir an unsern undergang gedenken. Sehen wir sie auffgehen, so sollen wir an unsere zukünfftige ausserstehunge vonn den Todten gedenken." Witzel, pp. Ccr–v.

[16] Craig M. Koslofky. *The Reformation of the Dead: Death and Ritual in Early Modern Germany, 1450–1700* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), pp. 46–54.

[17] Witzel, pp. Kkiv.

century would have known a genre of interactive sculpture with Witzel's macabre sensibility. Passers-by the churches in Nuremberg, Strassburg and Worms who glimpsed these figures lurking—in raised plinths near portals usually reserved for saints—saw the sculpture's skin crumble into dust and flesh crawl with creatures symbolizing the viewer's own sins. One of these sculptures, Frau Welt, (Lady World), appeared on the south portal of the Worms Cathedral *c.* 1300, while her consort, the Fürst der Welt (Prince of the World), appeared as an Antichrist-like figure at the south-west Strassburg Cathedral portal, opposite Christ himself, where he tempted the world with the apple of good and evil.[18] The Prince statue once placed near the Northern portal to Saint Sebald in Nuremberg (*c.* 1310) advances a step, as if inviting the viewer to join him a courtly garden dance, his elegant composure starkly contrasting with a knobby, decaying posterior. (fig. 9.4) Viewers themselves set this deadly striptease in motion by moving between the front and rear of the sculptures on their way in or out of the church. On the first encounter, they may have walked back and forth to repeat the transformation and so to determine whether the stone growths seen out of the corner of their eyes were really present. By doing so they could grasp the meaning of the revolting life-death contrast they had witnessed. Blithe smiles and expensive clothing masked each of the Frau and Fürst's rotting cadaverous backs, where toads, worms and snakes gnawed at their skin, burrowed in and out of their muscles, and stripped their bodies down to the bone.

Perhaps due in part to this influence, a market for luxury devotional items in a more personal, miniature scale thrived in the first quarter of the sixteenth century, supplying finely carved ivory and boxwood rosaries and altarpieces.[19] Several rosary beads survive with alternating views of youths and death's heads commenting once again on the fragility of life. These were often rendered in ivory, an expensive mate-

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[18] Wolfgang Stammler. *Frau Welt: Eine Mittelalterliche Allegorie* (Universitätsverlag Freiburg, 1959); for print sources, cf. E. de Jonghe, "The Changing Face of Lady World" in *Questions of meaning: Theme and motif in Dutch seventeenth-century painting*, trans. Michael Hoyle (Primavera Pers, Leiden, 2000), pp. 59–82. See images at www.bildindex.de (Aufnahme-nr. sskkf12693_15; Strasbourg) and (Aufnahme-Nr.: 20.654 and 20655; Worms).

[19] Memento mori boxwood carvings are sparsely discussed in standard sources. For triptychs, monstrances and rosary beads, see Susan Jean Romanelli, *South Netherlandish boxwood devotional sculpture, 1475–1530* (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1992); Fritz Scholten, *A Sense of Heaven: 16th-Century Boxwood Carvings for Private Devotion* (Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, 1999).

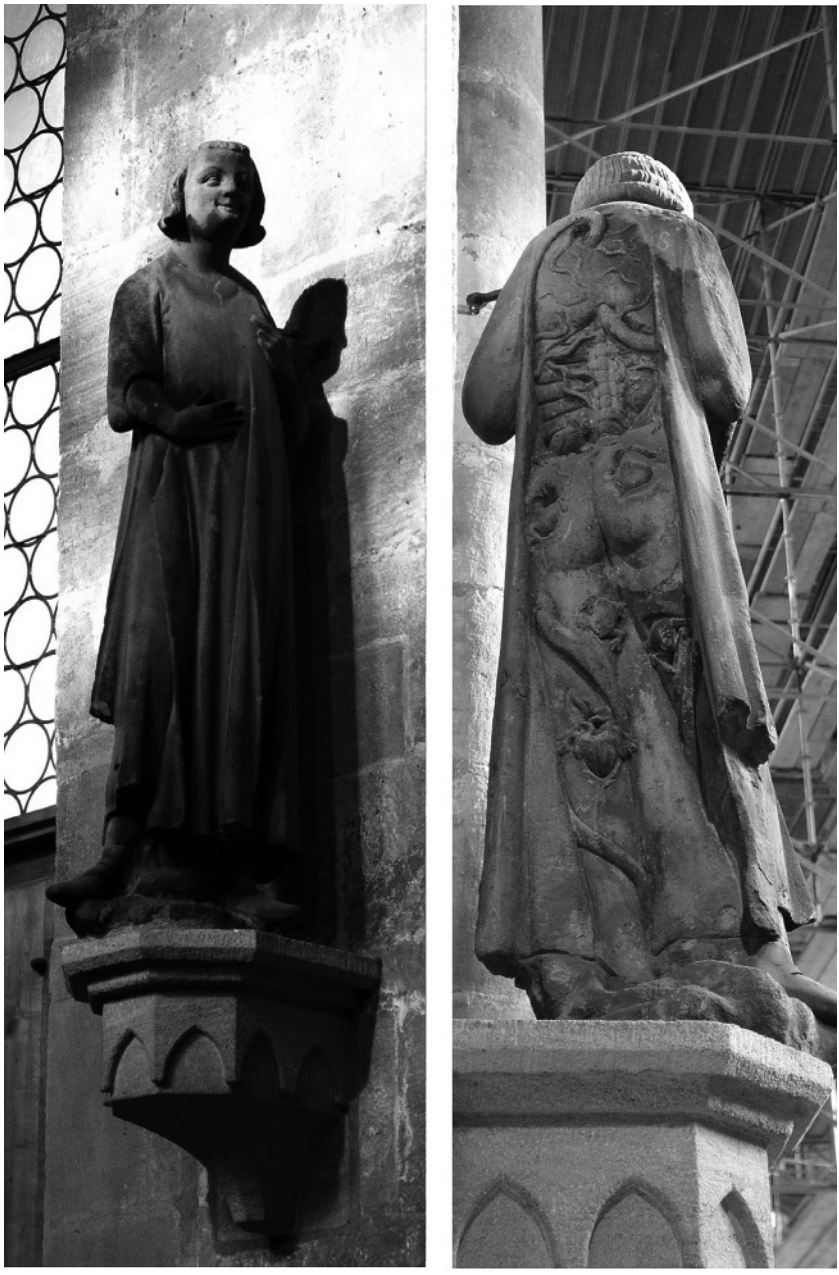

Fig. 9.4 *Fürst der Welt* sculpture (front and back), *c.* 1310, Saint Sebald Church, Nuremberg. Photo: author.

rial with the additional cachet of its resemblance to bone. Queen Anna of Bohemia and Hungary (1503–1547), the devout Catholic wife of Emperor Ferdinand I (1503–1564), owned a set of agate beads completed with an ornate ivory carving of a trio of such heads.[20] (fig. 9.5) During Anna's regular prayer schedule, it would have acted as a counter for the culminating prayer, its significance matched by its larger size and cost. In contrast to the dark red agate beads, with their blood-like pools, the creamy white ivory appears even more skeletal. The delicately carved group appears beneath an open arbor: a regal young man, a woman with a crown and scepter, and a skeleton with crossed arms. Although this bead did not open or possess other moving parts, Anna could have spun it around its chain to dwell on the significance of each successive side. In the absence of contrasting flaps, she could still catch a glimpse of the skeleton through the arbor while she gazed at each of the more lively figures, as if ever lurking behind the living.

A resident of Vienna from the early sixteenth century, when her husband ruled as King of Austria, Anna might have been inspired in her choice of devotional aid by hearing the occasional sermon pronounced at Saint Stephen's in Vienna (rather than a more private palace chapel). The stairway banister to the pulpit is a most unusual piece of religious architecture that still crawls with toads, snakes and strange billed animals wriggling up and down. Worn down over the generations, they suggest that Frau Welt's eerie parade of sins have begun encroaching on the sermon in progress. Anton Pilgrim (fl. *c*. 1500–1520) sculpted this monumental carving around 1515, which includes a watchdog at the top of the stair to fend off the vermin, busts of the four Evangelists, and a self portrait watching from a window below. The most animated of these figures are those climbing the banister, even though numerous hands over the centuries have smoothed them into abstract shapes with even eerier and deathly connotations.

Anna owned another deluxe interactive memento mori—an ivory cruciform sundial designed for her by the Nuremberg instrument-maker Georg Hartmann (1489–1564) with relief carvings of the Crucifixion and the Brazen Serpent.[21] Small enough to be hand-held, this type of instrument required the user to manipulate it directly,

[20] Vienna Schatzkammer (Inv. Nr. D 5.)

[21] Hartmann's letters to his patron, the Herzog Albrecht of Preußen (1490–1568) mention the gift, March 30, 1544, Berlin Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz (Signatur XX.HA.HBA A4 Kasten 203–212).

Fig. 9.5 *Memento Mori Rosary Bead*, ivory, *c.* 1500, belonging to Queen Anna of Bohemia and Hungary, Vienna Schatzkammer. Photo: author.

changing the position of a sliding leg to set the appropriate angle toward the sun for a reading of the local time anywhere in Europe. The cruciform shape of the timepiece referenced the owner's death, as well as Christ's sacrifice and his Resurrection. Most sundials and eventually watches were themselves symbols that implied that that time was running out for the viewer; the instruments often bore labels to this effect. Although it is not known if Anna collected interactive prints, later in life, she also became the dedicatee of a nominally religious lottery book, a printed game outfitted with a rotating wheel of fortune dial that answered questions such as "How will I die?" in fifty-six different ways. That query appeared near the top of the interactive dial, after the more positive "Will I have good luck?" The players' luck could only last so long before they both expired.[22]

Some memento moris referred to everyman's death or even to Christ's by means of a specific individual. As a souvenir a German knight on pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1585 brought back a tiny bone coffin modeled on the grave of the crusader Gottfrieds von Bouillion (d. 1100, Jerusalem), which the knight claimed to have rubbed against the true grave of Christ.[23] While the boxwood Last Judgment coffins referred to a biblical sinner by exposing his torturous state, this object lovingly references both a Christian hero and Christ himself. Constructed of a solid piece of bone, it does not open to display the hallowed bones. Even without moving parts, this memento had the potential as a contact relic to heal, as well as to keep its owner cognizant of the dangers and worldly temptations he would face up until the point of his own death. Mementos of specific graves were however less common than universal grotesques, as even transi figures barely resembled their former selves. While miniature carvings such as the Bouillion tomb or the boxwood Last Judgment are virtuosic in scale and finish, one of the most spectacular small-scale memento mori sculptures from the sixteenth century is now at the Schnütgen Museum in Cologne.[24] (fig. 9.6)

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[22] Paulus Pambst, *Loossbuch zu Ehren der römischen vngerischen vnnd böhemischen Künigin*, (Strassburg: Balthassar Beck, 1546).

[23] "HIC IACET INCLITUS GODEFR(I)DUS DE BVILON QVI TOTAM ISTAM TERRAM ACQVISIT CVLTVI CHRISTIANO CVIVS ANIMA CVM CHRISTO REQVIESCAT AMEN." This solid object measures 2.9 cm. in length. *Faszination Meisterwerk*: Dürer, Rembrandt, Riemenschneider, (Nuremberg: Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 2004), pp. 90–91; (Nr. KG 1234).

[24] Jezler, *Himmel, Hölle, Fegefeuer*, Nr. 11, pp. 181–2; Kammel, Frank Matthias, *Spiegel der Seligkeit: Privates Bild und Frömmigkeit im Spätmittelalter* (Nuremberg: Germanisches Nationalmuseum, 2000), Nr. 245, pp. 417–18.

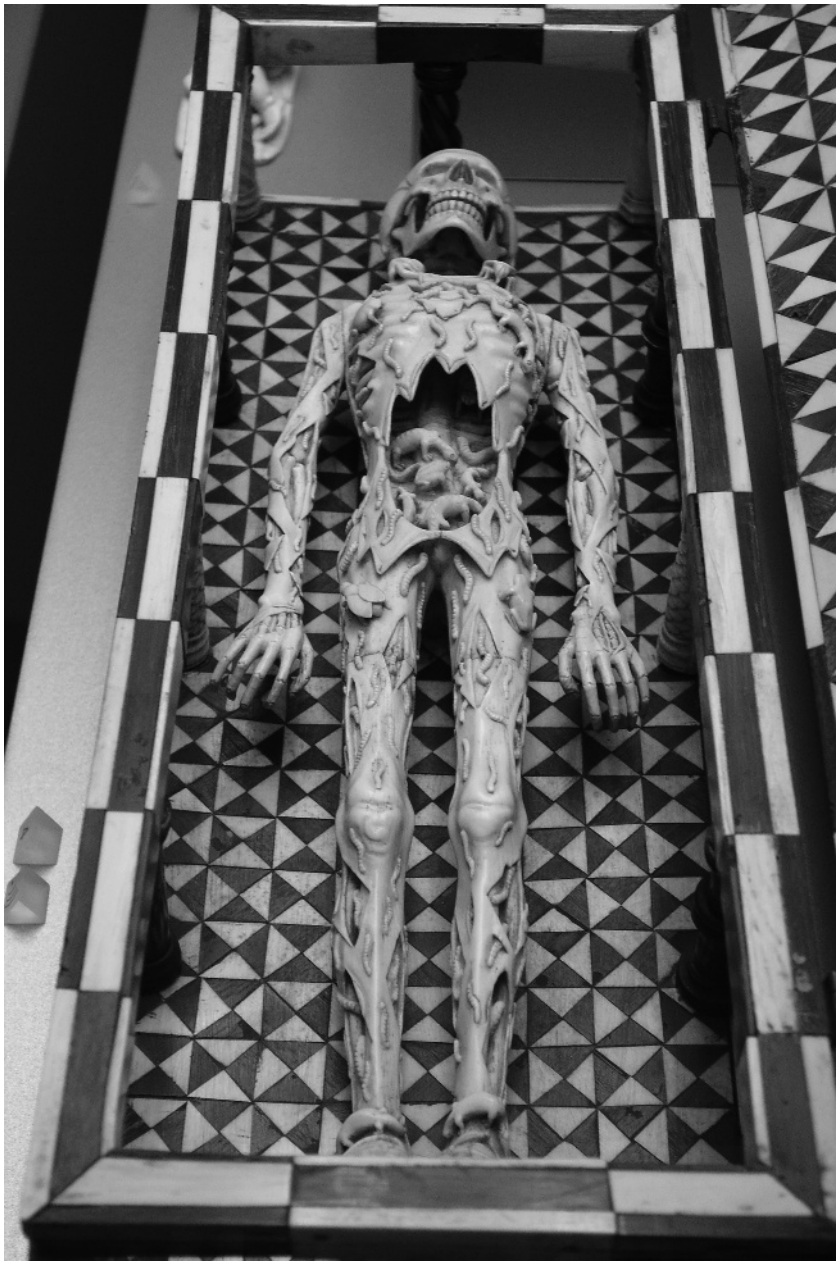

Fig. 9.6 *Memento Mori*, ivory and ebony, *c.* 1525, Schnütgen Museum, Cologne. Photo: author.

Around the same time as Frau Welt imagery, tomb sculpture conventions took on a more morbid tenor. As Kathleen Cohen has shown, these recumbent, often life-sized transi figures differed from their sleep-like gisante predecessors in that they showed in great detail the physical changes and degradation that awaited the body of the deceased.[25] Some even contrasted the once lively form of that person with its meaty, disintegrating carcass. As they did for the living Frau Welt and her Fürst, worms, snakes, toads and other reptiles attack these stone corpses, tearing the flesh from the skeletons, and ravenously reduce the deceased into anonymous, humiliated bones.

The Schnütgen Memento Mori represents one of these bodies in ivory, lying recumbent in an ornate ivory and ebony-patterned box. It has an arched, hinged lid and open arcades on the sides, combining the transparent arbor of Anna's rosary bead with the fine relief of the hinged boxwood coffins. In scale and implied state of disintegration, it relates more closely to the transi genre than the tortured, but corporally intact sinner in his boxwood flames, or the slickly clean skeletons of the rosary beads. The corpse can be seen both from the top when the checkered lid has been opened, and through the sides of the arcade. The whole object is significantly larger than the boxwood coffins. The corpse alone measures 36 cm, more than six times the length of the wooden bodies.[26] This ivory cadaver represents marked decay; though its narrow hips suggest a male everyman, its gender is no longer discernible, as the grubs, worms, toads, flies and lizards have consumed the flesh in erratic ribbons, exposing bones and consuming the organs of the chest cavity. The figure's hands lie flat and useless at the sides, the skin of the arms peeling in tatters. The body is composed of several pieces of ivory, and is supported by ivory pegs that also tether it to the base of its cage; no owner could have cradled it in their arms without taking it to pieces. Perhaps they came close enough to the artwork by opening the lid—until they could no longer bear to look upon the vermin feasting within its festering wounds and gaping crevasses.

The structure of the box contributes to the reading of the sculpture it contains. Ten columns of the same contrasting black and white

[25] Cohen, *Metamorphosis*, 77 ff.

[26] The "tomb" measures 12 × 42 × 15 cm. Jezler, p. 43; Kammel, *Spiegel der Seligkeit*, pp. 416–18.

materials support the arcade under the movable lid, six of which bear tiny *pleurant* figures from different social classes, a *Dance of Death* in miniature. These are paired as Pope and Emperor, Patriarch and Sultan, and Monk and Nobleman. The latter couple bears banderoles with respective texts: *mourir nous faut*, and: *quand dieu plat*: "We must die when God pleases." These scrolls suggest a French or Burgundian origin, perhaps linking the box to the Netherlands with the boxwood coffins.

Similar wooden objects were in Duke Albrecht V in Munich's *kunstkammer* by the early sixteenth century. For the wealthy, permanent materials such as these finely-worked woods and ivories attracted the touch and the collector's desire as well as an urge for contemplation. For others, who wanted to paste their memento mori on the wall of their shop or to hide it between the pages of a book, paper versions of these sculptures became more popular. Their survival rate is extremely poor, especially in original contexts. While the *Spinner* survives in only one impression, other, more scientific variations on the genre flourished. Anatomy flap prints in particular offered a very literal contrast between life and death, and showed the internal workings of the body in as visceral a way as Frau Welt's posterior and the *transi* put decay on display. As Andrea Carlino has shown, by the late 1530s, pairs of anatomical flap prints published at first by Heinrich Vogtherr the Elder (1490–1556) of Strassburg (and copied shortly thereafter in Nuremberg, Dresden, London, Paris and Prague) offered several meanings as they allowed the viewer to dissect an approximation of their own body, layer by layer.[27] (fig. 9.7) Real bodies decayed so quickly that actual dissections had to be held in the winter, preferably in the coldest months, and few non-students could witness the procedure. The Vogtherr paper model was anatomically vague, as it employed a medieval conception of the body. In fact it preceded the groundbreaking publications of Andreas Vesalius (1514–1564), which would include similar interactive components that owners could assemble the body parts themselves.[28]

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[27] Andrea Carlino, *Paper Bodies: A Catalogue of Anatomical Fugitive Sheets 1538–1687*, trans. Noga Arikha, (London: Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 1999), especially the extensive catalogue.

[28] Vesalius' *Fabrica* and *Epitome* includes full-body models of both male and females, but lacks the flaps for the epidermis, rendering the conceit much murkier to the casual observer.

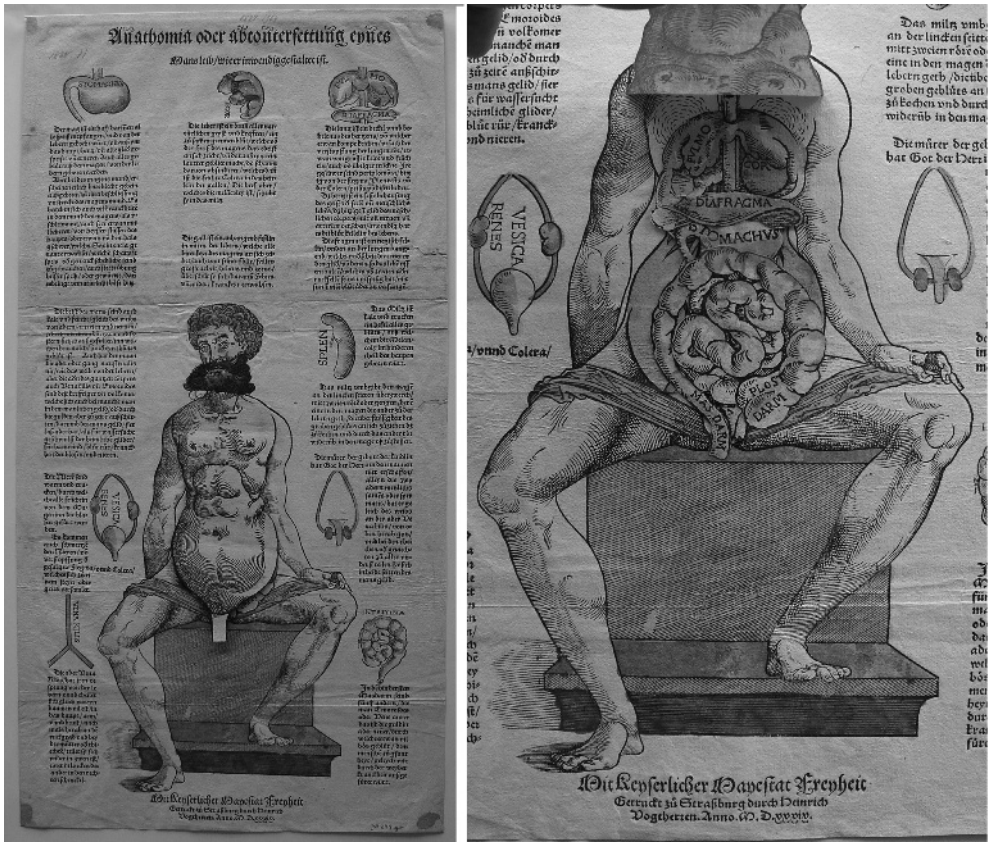

Fig. 9.7 Heinrich Vogtherr, *Male Flap Anatomy*, colored woodcut (open and closed), 1539, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Handschriftenabteilung. Photo: author.

Variations and reprintings of the Vogtherr figures, eventually including some Vesalian improvements, continued to be sold into the seventeenth century. The earliest German editions came with manuals originally penned by Vogtherr that described the dissection procedure and implied that contents of the body would spew themselves out in wild abandon if certain parts—particularly the intestines—were not properly constrained. The impression of the Vogtherr male anatomy figure in Berlin is characteristically hand colored, coding even the internal organs under the flap to match the diagrams on the top level of the broadsheet. The riotous intestines flap appears in a lively bright madder pink. This embellishment of the contents of the internal cavi-

ties is not far removed from the widespread misunderstanding and fear that the stomach was a festering home for worms, vermin and other animals, which if they did not emerge during the host's lifetime, spontaneously increased in population upon their death.[29] Women were considered particularly subject to such infestations, due to their weak digestion and supposed liking for a rich diet.[30]

Building on these associations, some anatomy flap prints included carefully placed fig leaves and flowers identifying the figures as Adam and Eve. Others included explicit memento mori statements including the phrase Nosce te Ipsum, Know Yourself (i.e., your mortality). This was standard practice; even the first broadsheet of a corpse known to have been drawn from a real specimen was bound into many editions of an early field surgery manual with another sheet of a skeleton drawn after a Strassburg transi sculpture. That image of the statue was labeled as a "true representation of the dead man," "Ein contrafacter Todt." This skeleton sheet included an ode on death as well as a quasi-scientific lettering scheme to identify its bones.[31]

Despite the more explicit details of Vogtherr's dissection manual, anatomical flap prints permitted viewers to lift layers of organs without unpleasant interference, especially from ravening vermin. Their departure from the infested transi sculpture model suggests a controlled anatomic theater environment. During the seventeenth century (and possibly even earlier), a more expensive equivalent to these paper mannequins also developed. These ivory figurines too were marketed in gendered pairs so that the consequences of the sex act might become less shrouded in mystery. That explanation had been one of the selling points of the paper versions as well.[32] These statuettes had removable stomachs that revealed tiny carved innards; in the case of the female, the omnipresent fetus was affixed by means of a silken umbilical cord that made it harder for the owner to lose. The accuracy of such

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[29] Piero Camporesi, *The Incorruptible Flesh: Bodily mutation and mortification in religion and folklore: Cambridge Studies in Oral and Literate Culture*, trans., Tania Croft-Murray (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 78–89.

[30] Camporesi, p. 82.

[31] The sheet is generally attributed to Hans Wechtlin (1480/85–after 1526), these two sheets were tipped into Johann Schott's many editions of an early surgery manual, beginning in 1517: Hans von Gersdorff, *Feldtbuch der Wundartzney* (Strassburg: Johannes Schott, 1517).

[32] These sculptures are notoriously hard to date; the best-known workshop that produced them was the Augsburg Zick family in the seventeenth century.

carvings was minimal, but dozens survive, demonstrating a demand similar to that for elaborate memento mori carvings and prints.[33]

Memento Mori: Counter Reformation

Interactive memento mori engravings underwent a resurgence around the turn of the seventeenth century in Cologne Germany and in Italy, due perhaps both to the unrepentant Catholicism of these areas and to millenarian fears.[34] Eschewing anatomy for skeletons, the itinerant German artist Matthias Greuter's (*c.* 1566–1638) prints particularly demonstrate the continued popularity of the memento mori into the Counter Reformation and the next century. He was one of at least three artists active in Cologne that produced moralistic sets of women with liftable skirts, while broadsheets from Venice mimicked his and other Northern artists' approaches to the subject. Even some of Greuter's images lacking movable flaps and an explicit space for writing incited their viewers to action. He produced an undated engraving of a skull (*c.* 1588), which was one of the few sixteenth-century prints actually entitled "*Memento Mori*. Andrea Andreani's *Wheel of Death* with the same subtitle appeared the same year."[35] (figs. 9.8, 9.12) Three of the four impressions extant of Greuter's skull have been annotated or otherwise altered. These physical changes constitute undeniable proof of the strong reactions the image elicited. Greuter's skull is burnished more decoratively than its Netherlandish worm-infested predecessor, (fig. 9.2) but the cavernous darkness of its eye sockets suggest a rough-hewn presence belying the elegant curvature of the engraved lines. This leering challenger bears an additional Latin commandment below the image, already used by Georg Witzel in the 1530s: "*Vigilate & orate quia nescitis diem nec horam*," Be vigilant and pray, for you know neither the day nor the hour." The owner of the Coburg impres-

[33] Repositories include New York Academy of Medicine, National Institute of Health, London Museum of Science, Yale University's Cushing Library, and the Germanisches Nationalmuseum.

[34] Robert W. Scribner, "Why was there no Reformation in Cologne?" in *Popular Culture and Popular Movements in Reformation Germany* (London: Hambledon Press, 1987), pp. 217–41.

[35] *New Hollstein German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts, 1400–1700* (Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sound & Vision Interactive, 1993–), Greuter, 222: Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg, Munich Graphische Sammlung, British Museum and the Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nuremberg (first state).

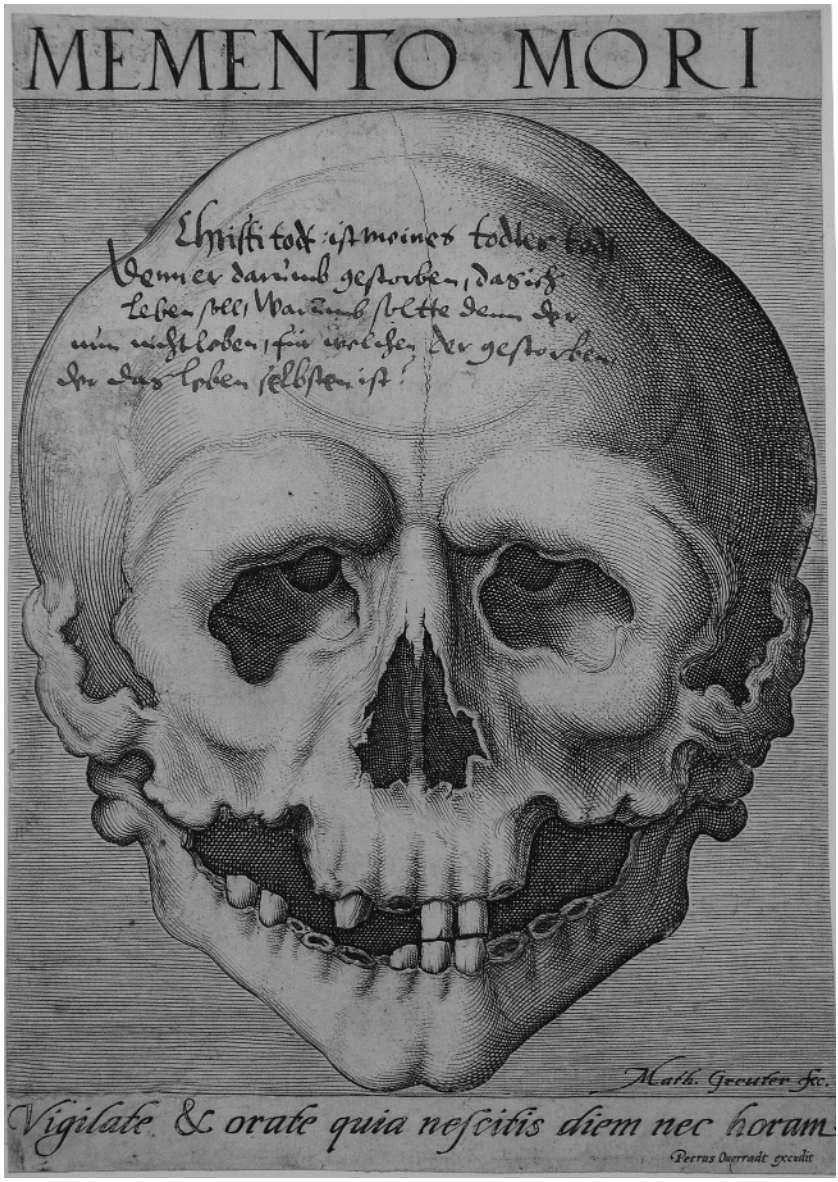
MEMENTO MORI
Christi tod ist meines todes tod
Wem er darumb gestorben, das ist
leben stet, Warumb stirbt dem der
nun nicht leben, für verlesen der gestorben
der das leben selbsten ist.
Math. Greuter fec.
Vigilate & orate quia nescitis diem nec horam
Petrus Overradt excudit

Fig. 9.8 Matthias Greuter, *Memento Mori*, engraving *c.* 1588, Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg. Photo: author.

sion of Greuter's *Memento Mori* penned five lines across the skull's glistening pate in response. These resolutely emphasize that life after death awaits believers: "Christ's death is the death of my death, for he died so that I should live. Why then should I not live?"[36] Another user augmented the impression in Munich with a forlorn *Mortis* in brown ink and large letters under the printed *Vigilante*, reinforcing death's ever-present danger in a single word. Finally, the British Museum impression reveals a more violent reaction. That viewer was inspired not to *add* meditatively to the image, but to *remove* from it, cutting off the engraved marginal texts entirely, leaving only Greuter's unobtrusive signature and his looming skull. The fourth impression, in Nuremberg, left unadulterated, represents an earlier state signed "Math. Greuter exc." instead of "fec." This implies that Greuter himself published the work initially, but then sold the plate to the Cologne publisher Peter Overadt, whose Latinized name appears in the lower right margin of the second state. As three quarters of the surviving impressions are from Overadt, he must have reprinted the popular design aggressively.

Greuter's most important contribution to interactive printmaking appeared in 1596 in Lyon (Lugduni). It was later republished by Overadt's Cologne competitor Johann Bussemacher. (fig. 9.9) Greuter's seminal interactive engraving represents Frau Welt, and features a camouflaged skirt flap just above a skull cartouche. Elegantly attired, she holds an upright fan that emphasizes a Latin motto suspended above her, and seems to point at her skirt with her other hand. This gesture however changes depending on the placement of the flap. The index finger partially disappears beneath the skirt in the Berlin impression, suggesting that the finger keeps pointing below the skirt, and so explicitly indicates the flap's presence. In an unpublished second impression at Wolfegg, the flap is positioned lower, just beneath the hand. Here the forefinger turns out to be bent backward rather than pointing, and so indicates the flap ever so slightly.[37] Adam and Eve appear on plinths at the sides, forbidden fruit in hand and fig leaves

[36] "Christi todt ist meines todtes todt/ Denn er darumb gestorben, das ich/ Leben soll, warumb soltte denn [darrin?]/ nicht leben, für [immer?], der gestorben/ der das leben selbsten ist?"

[37] A set of later flap prints of a couple (now lacking the flaps), also at the Stiftung Moritzburg at Halle an der Salle, which appears to be based very closely on the Greuter *Frau Welt*, reinforces this detail.

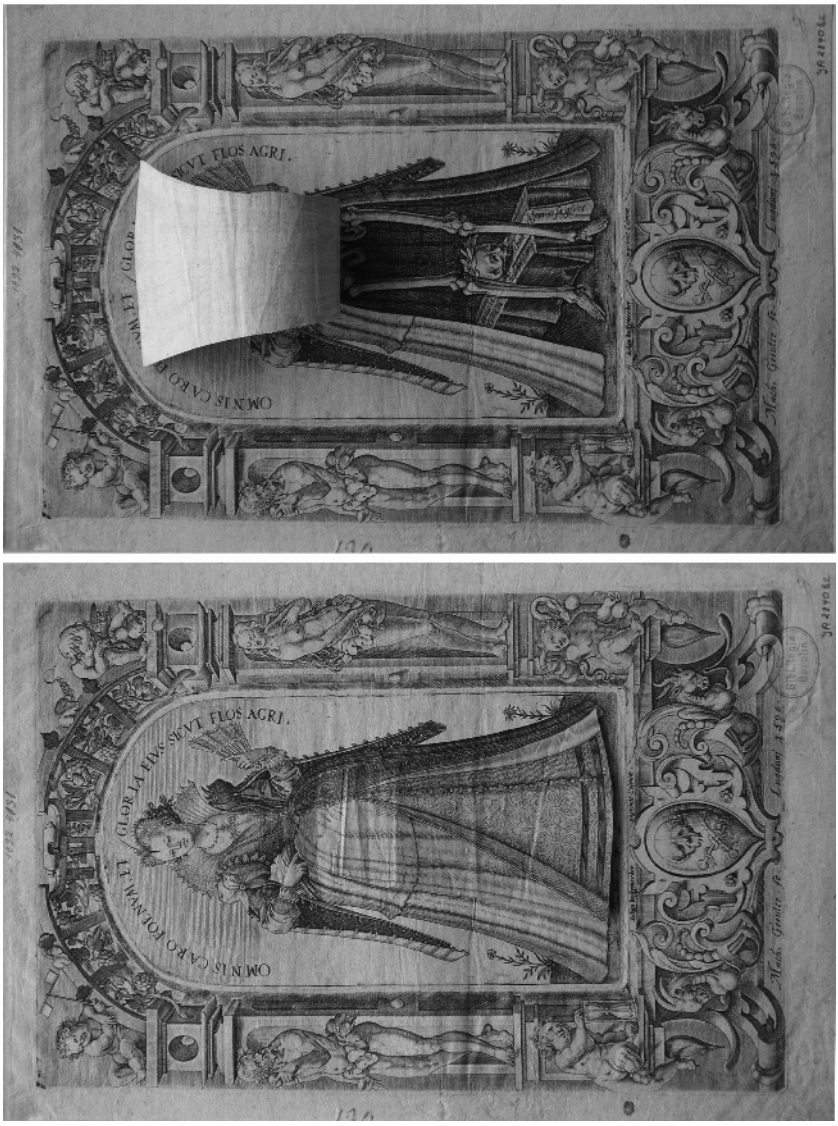

Fig. 9.9 Matthias Greuter, *Frau Welt*, flap engraving (open and closed), 1596, Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Handschriftenabteilung. Photo: author.

beneath, alluding to their loss of innocence and to that of any viewer who pries up the flap affixed between them. Only the center panel of Frau Welt's skirt lifts, unlike the woodcut Spinner's full apron, and reveals fully skeletal legs rather than verminous flesh. These dry bones are poised before a coffin topped with a laurel-wreathed skull on a mourning cloth. The French text on the coverlet forlornly paraphrases the Latin above that all flesh is grass, and all glory is as fleeting as the flowers of the field. That fading glory is also the world, Frau Welt.[38]

While the skirt of Greuter's Frau Welt reveals a straightforward coffin, related interactive prints of the allegory Pride appeared around 1600 by the Cologne-based engraver Conrad Goltzius (1560/65–1617), again published with Peter Overadt and Johann Bussemacher, who produced numerous devotional engravings.[39] Goltzius bolstered Greuter's skeleton legs with Biblical rejoinders hidden under his flaps. For two female Pride figures, Adam and Eve appear seated on a replica of Greuter's coffin, while for Goltzius's male pendant, they are being chased out of the Garden of Eden. (fig. 9.10) Like Greuter's skull, the liftable skirt allegories elicited strong responses. A viewer of the Rijksmuseum impression of one Goltzius female Pride blotted out Adam's erection, while in the Pride at the Stiftung Moritzburg at Halle an der Salle, the pair's objectionable nakedness has been torn away almost entirely. Again in Halle, the flaps have been ripped off of two later engravings copying Greuter's Frau Welt.

Like them or not, the Greuter and Goltzius prints were often collected together; impressions of the Greuter *Frau Welt* and the Goltzius *Pride* published by Peter Overadt appear a page apart in a Wolfegg album of "Caricatures and Caprices," while Goltzius' three flap prints also appear together in another volume. As the bulk of that private

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[38] Not in Hollstein. Berlin Staatsbibliothek Handschriften Abteilung and an unpublished impression in the Kunstammlungen der Fürsten Walburg-Wolfegg. Bernadette Schöller, *Kölner Druckgraphik der Gegenreformation* (Köln: Kölnisches Stadtmuseum, 1992), pp. 87–98.

[39] Hollstein *Dutch and Flemish* (Conrad Goltzius 8–9). H. 8 (Bussemacher): National Gallery of Art, Washington; Amsterdam; Berlin (Kostumbibliothek); Wolfegg. H.9 (Overadt): Halle (first state, center plate only); Amsterdam; British Museum; Wolfegg (first and second states, center plate only). For the male figure published by Overadt in the same frame as H.9, not in Hollstein, and long known only at the British Museum, see: Ger Luijten. "Frills and furbelows: satires on fashion and pride around 1600," *Simiolus* 24 (1996), pp. 140–60. The Rijksmuseum recently purchased the third known impression of this print; another unpublished impression lacking the flap, is at Wolfegg.

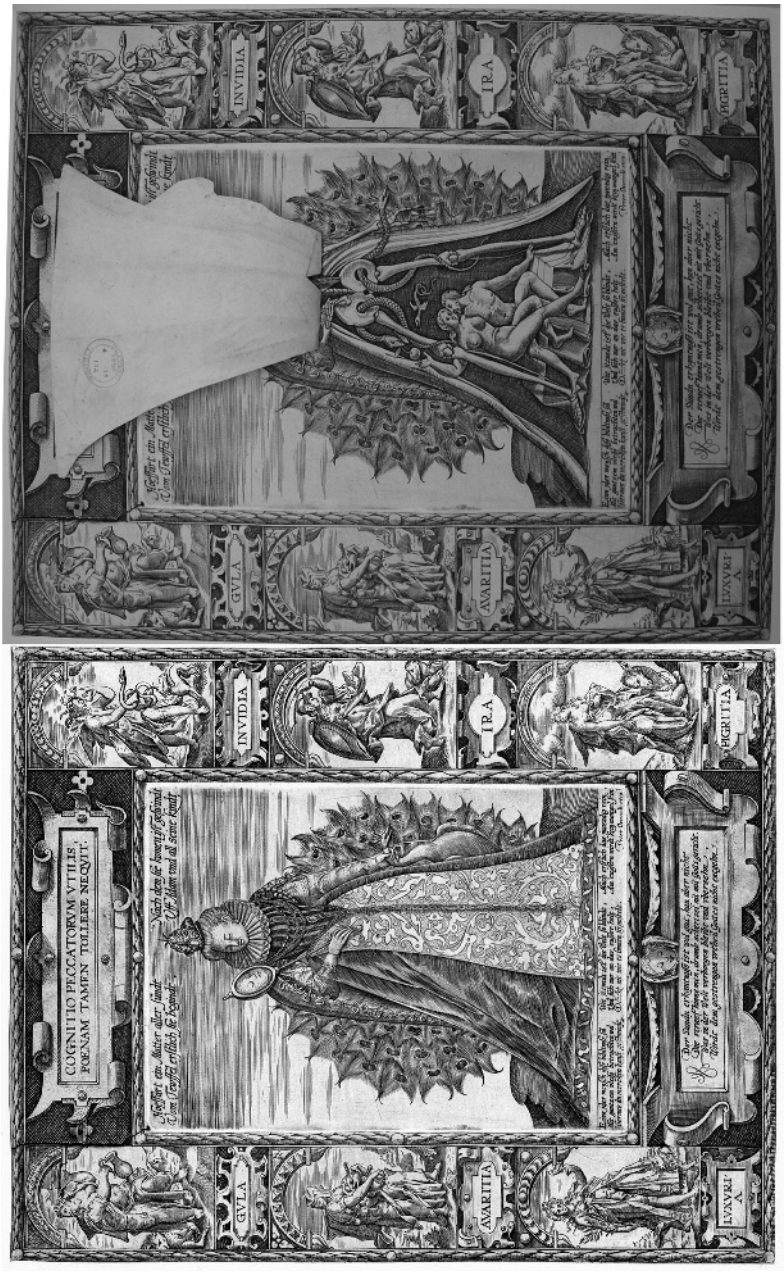

Fig. 9.10 Conrad Goltzius, *Pride*, flap engraving (open and closed), *c.* 1600. Photo: Trustees of the British Museum and the author.

collection was amassed in the seventeenth century, these prints may well have been purchased together, and their groupings suggest that the compiler of the albums realized their visual and interactive similarities, if only to quarantine them from the rest of the collection. Indeed, in the first volume the left corner of each of their skirts has been pasted down slightly, as if to spare the viewer the shock of death lurking beneath. While the female *Prides* in the second volume remain untouched, their male companion is barely recognizable as an interactive image. His flap has been torn entirely away, leaving only skeleton legs, the Expulsion, and some minor glue residue.

Even when gently pinioned to the page, these prints employ the same illusionistic sleight of hand to illustrate the subtle transition between life and death. In its most basic form, this refers back to the medieval Frau Welt sculptures. Like the woodcut *Spinner*, the Cologne images depict their interactive sinners from the front, but Greuter and Goltzius incorporate decay into their elegant images nonetheless. As already noted, Greuter's *Frau Welt* is subtler in indicating her skirt with one slightly extended finger. The Goltzius *Pride* transformation relies on each *Pride's* attendant peacock, which themselves symbolize pride. A viewer's act of lifting the flap severs the birds' tufted heads and necks, and reveals a more sinuous undercarriage that transforms the preening fowl into snakes, twisting and turning through *Pride's* naked, but hardly salacious, hip bones, becoming an integral part of the woman's form. The mirror and flowers held by *Pride* seamlessly revert to the traditional symbols of death, bones and an hourglass, once they slip below the line of the skirt. Although these women adopt the general premise of the woodcut *Spinner*, from the liftable skirt to their agile snake accomplices, the tiny naked figures of Adam and Eve and the sterile bones of the transformed *Prides* and *Frau Welt* are worlds away from the forceful sensuality of the hand-colored, roughly-carved *Spinner* and her guiltily replaced liftable skirt.

Around the time Greuter produced his flap print, an interactive engraving series appeared in Italy. From 1589–1597, the Venetian Bertelli family's publishing empire produced several costume books including a courtesan with a liftable skirt. Several of their more respectable female types also hid behind the flap curtains of sedan chairs and other modes of transportation. A larger-scale engravings series extended that cliché into seven sheets of courtesans by the sea, in carriages, in gondolas and riding their older lovers mercilessly into

the ground.[40] From its similarity to this set of costume books made for foreigners, their main market appears to have been Northern tourists and humanists in search of local color and mild titillation, as opposed to the heavy-handed morality of the Cologne flaps. Yet one of the double spreads from the series unexpectedly contrasts the flesh with its unthinkable end in a variation on Greuter. (fig. 9.11) On the left, a courtesan with two drunken swains celebrates carnival on stage-set-like streets; the viewer's furtive pawing at the printed skirt reveals short underskirts and the deceptively tall chopine clogs then worn by courtesans. All three figures are masked for anonymity, and this status extends momentarily to the viewer. In many other impressions of the Venetian courtesan prints, the wear and tear on these paper skirts became eminently visible over time. The engraved ink frequently wore away in places, leaving the viewer's fingerprints on the skirt in negative.

The right side of the sheet depicts another courtesan at home, where her wary look into the mirror implies her declining profitability. Like Greuter's *Frau Welt*, she raises an arm to a motto above, in this case, "*Errige Oculos et Vide Quid Eris*," "Lift your eyes, and see what you will be." Witzel again comes to mind with his emphasis on the importance of sight. In this case he might also have championed gazing on earthly delights as the unorthodox means for the viewer to meditate on their impending end. Their fingers would soon discover that this tantalizing skirt reveals nothing but arid bones. Only a few other Italian memento mori prints of any kind have survived, and the topic does not appear to have been as popular south of the Alps. But again, sex and the mortification of the flesh go hand in hand in these unique engravings. Copies with flaps drawn after other Bertelli courtesans survive in several *Stammbuch* albums of prints, drawings and autographs collected during studies and travels (most owned in fact by young Germans), reinforcing the likelihood that flap erotica was produced for tourists, particular of Northern tastes, and was consumed in such quantities that the original prints could not always be obtained.

Even the most dramatic Italian memento mori print extant borrowed extensively from the North. (fig. 9.12) Andrea Andreani's

[40] The complete set is at the New York Public Library, tipped in between two different Bertelli family publications.

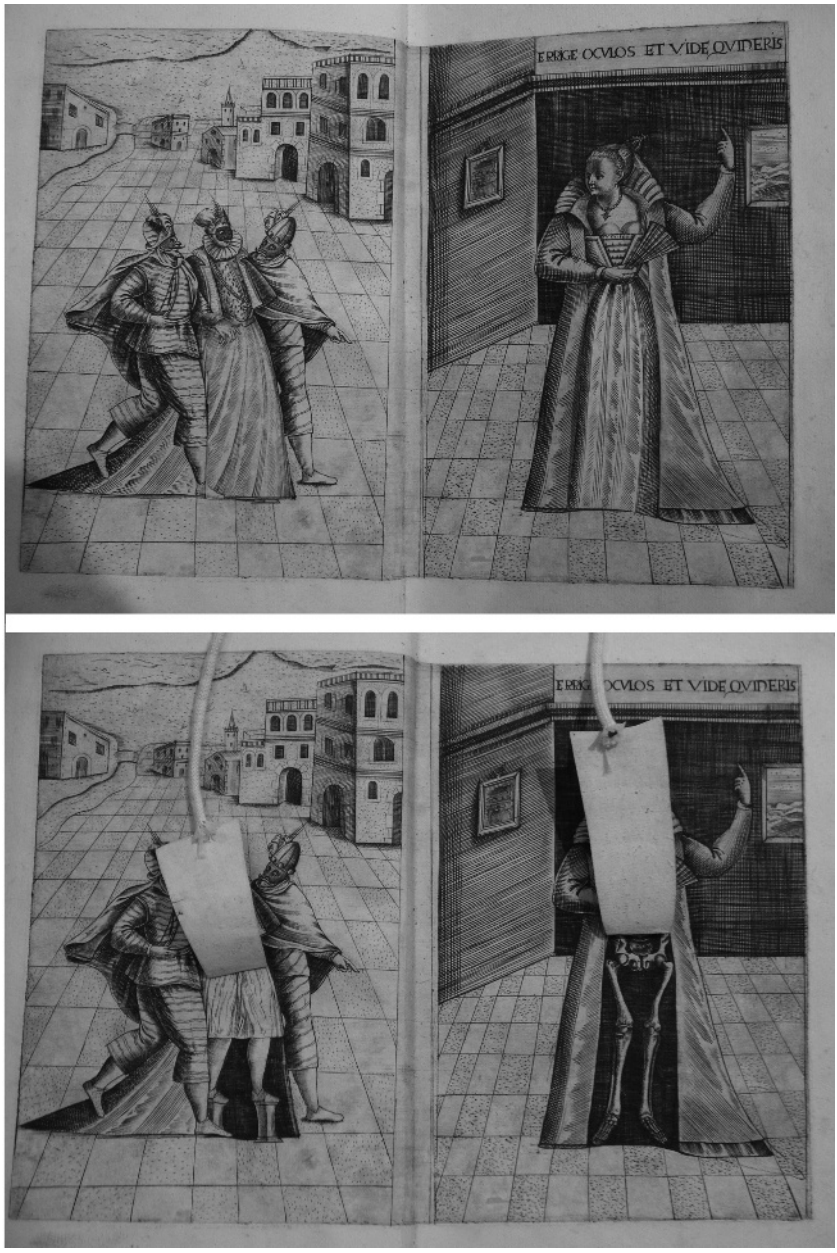

Fig. 9.11 Luca Bertelli (?), *Courtesans*, flap engravings (open and closed), *c.* 1596, Print Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations. Photo: author.

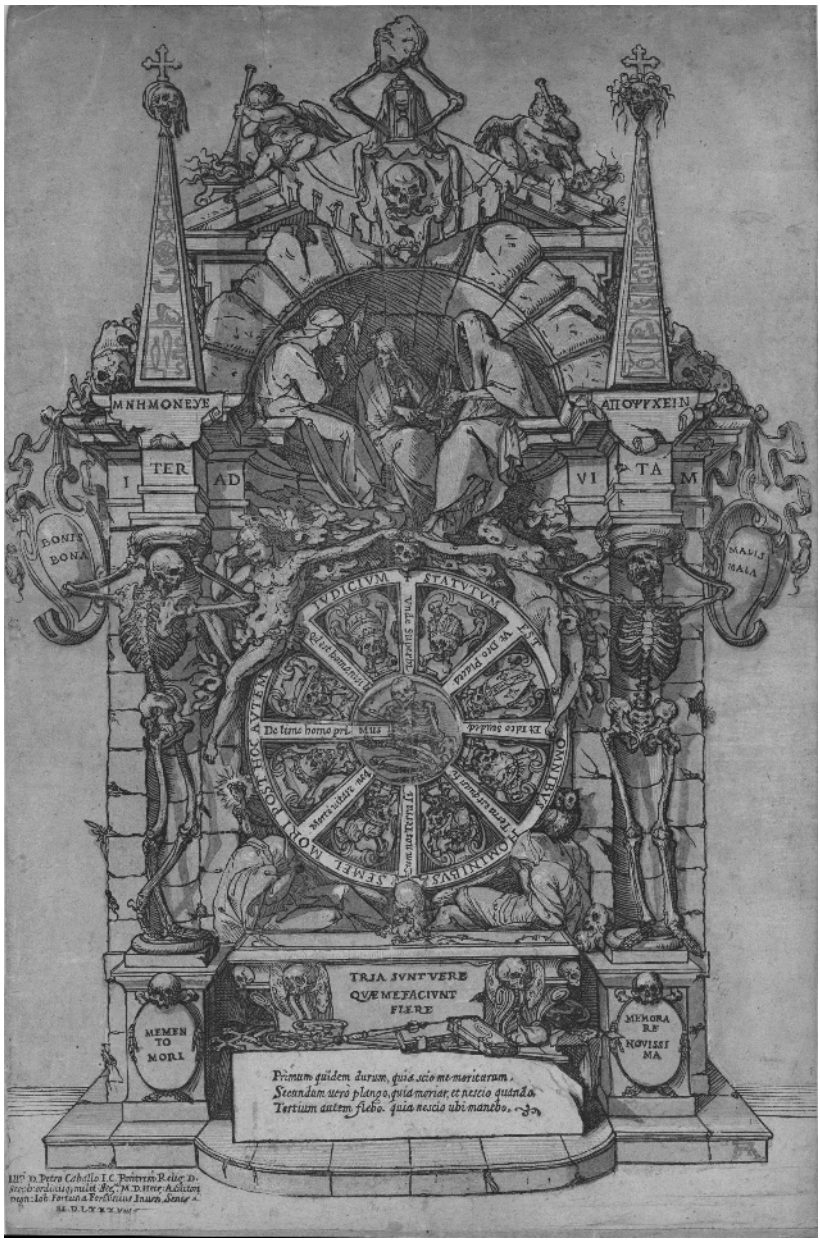

Fig. 9.12 Andrea Andreani, *Wheel of Death*, chiaroscuro woodcut, 1588. Photo: Trustees of the British Museum.

interactive Wheel of Death of 1588 is roughly contemporary with Greuter's Memento Mori.[41] (fig. 9.8) Unlike Greuter, Andreani does not display the term memento mori as a main title, but places it on a lower column of the fictive architecture opposite its equivalent, "memora re novissima," "remember the last things" (i.e., death). Unlike Anna of Bohemia and Hungary's lottery book, this wheel of fortune only answers one question not how, but will I die? The woodcut further reinforces death's inevitability with its central interactive dial, which is sewn through the center of a large wheel of skulls in ecclesiastical headgear. This disc shows a skeleton crouched within the circle, the upper curve of which is bounded by his scythe. When the user rotates the dial, Death dances, turning an uncharacteristically giddy somersault. He holds a tiny slip of paper with the letters "mus" at the edge of the dial, which is meaningless on its own, but becomes the first person plural ending for most Latin verbs and also serves as a noun ending in the accusative. The roots for these words appear on the spokes of the wheel that separate the different skulls into their own compartments. When viewers used the dial to realign the letters to the words at each spoke of the wheel, they completed a dire pronouncement. Roughly translated: "No one escapes death, man first came from dust, what is man but dust and pride, we should please God and study this idea that the earth is temporary."[42]

The rotating wheel at the center of Andreani's composition[43] is itself derivative of Queen Anna's book, and the graphic imagery of the sheet combines several Northern references as well, including Holbein's Dance of Death—Death's culminating coat of arms, complete with a snake-chewing skull. Skeletal arms again channeling Holbein reach out from an hourglass atop the architecture, as if to crush the viewer with a boulder. Two of Vesalius' skeletons also participate. Their upper

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[41] Andreani also produced two chiaroscuro woodcuts of freestanding skulls, and a Magdalene-like figure contemplating a third. Caroline Karpinski, ed., *The Illustrated Bartsch*: *Italian Artists (TIB), Chiaroscuro Woodcuts*. Vol. 48 (New York: Abaris Books, 1983). Andreani appears under several sections: "Allegories," Nr. 13–II (*Wheel of Death*, my title); "Fanciful Subjects," Nrs. 14, *A Woman Contemplating a Skull*; 28, *A Skull*. A second *Skull* (with jawbone) is at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, but not in *TIB*.

[42] "Morte vitare neqmus/de limo homo primus/quid est homani si limus/unde Superbimus/ut Deo placeamus/et ideo studeamus/terra est quasi fimus/."

[43] A predecessor from medieval manuscripts, the *Rota* wheel (with concentric circles or sometimes with moving components) had several applications, including calculating Easter and mneumonics. Carruthers, pp. 251–252.

torsos now support stone columns, but they remain recognizable from the Fabrica. These mute guardians flank the turning wheel in its architectural folly, where stripped of their carefully studied epidermis and musculature they signify once more the passing of the flesh.

Memento Mori: A Deadly Art?

Death and its imagery pervaded the late medieval and early modern period, and art duly reflected the realities of this uncertain life. Northern artists and craftsmen in particular reminded the viewer of their certain death, but creatively rendered this tired truth afresh. Death's graphical and sculptural animation, whether he danced, leered out from under a skirt, or revolved, and the burrowing reptiles infesting his worldly victims suggest that death had become a most *lively* concept indeed. Thus a coffin could be carried or worn as a symbol of hope rather than of despair, and the more detailed the handheld corpse, the better ingrained the viewer's meditations.

Not only did viewers manipulate these prints and sculptures, opening and shutting them and caressing them, as they might less gruesome devotional triptychs or rosary beads, but the objects themselves interacted as well. Death took center stage as increased printmaking possibilities allowed experimentation with multiple layers glued or sewn in place, whether hinged flaps like boxwood coffin lids, or dials turning slowly like the death's head beads. The materials used were significant, for paper could mimic bone as well as ivory could. Vesalius recommended the viewer use vellum to reinforce the anatomical flaps in his Fabrica and Epitome, supplying a layer of animal skin to manikins that like the skeletons, lacked an epidermis of their own. Even transi figures had been painted the shade of bone, the better to contrast with the brightly colored vermin that inhabited them.[44]

While Vesalius' viewers could construct their own paper manikins, one German nobleman would help raise the printed and personalized memento mori to an unsurpassed plateau. In 1576, the engraved frieze of the funeral cortege of the Protestant Landgraf Philipp der Großmütige of Hessen was issued with a paper flap allowing viewers to remove the cloth covering his coffin and reveal a realistic portrait

[44] Oosterwijk, p. 70.

of his body inside,[45] repeatedly, if so desired. Frau Welt sculptures and the open architecture of some transi tombs allowed visual comparisons between the body alive and in gruesome death as a viewer moved around the sculpture. Similarly, this engraving offered an explicit encounter with both death's abstract presence, and its specific portrait of the decaying body of the Landgraf. His body and head are clothed roughly, not left naked to the elements, but he is exposed nonetheless, with only his arms protectively crossed on his chest once the lid is lifted. Evidently, the preacher Georg Witzel's fears that Protestants would simply forget the look, smell and everyday nature of death were unfounded. The memento mori remained an effective, pervasive and truly universal warning, regardless of the viewer's faith. If the throng of mourners and guards in the extensive engraving sequence failed to impress the viewer, Philipp's humbled presentation in death as an interactive print could not fail to prove memorable.

[45] This print is now known only in a twentieth-century copy, but was produced over a nine-year period by the court painter Michael Muller. Entry in: *Landgraf Philipp der Großmütige 1504–1567: Hessen im Zentrum der Reformation: Begleitband zu einer Ausstellung des Landes Hessen* (Hessen: Ph. Schmidt, 2004), pp. 283–84.

PART IV

PAINTING, SPECTACLE, AND PERFORMATIVITY

10. PREPARING THE MIND. PREPARING THE SOUL. THE FUSION OF FRANCISCAN THOUGHT INTO THE DAILY LIVES OF FRIARS IN THE SACRISTY DECORATION OF SANTA CROCE, FLORENCE

Michelle A. Erhardt

The Franciscan friar enters the sacristy of Santa Croce beneath the image of the *Crucifixion.* He is mindful of the teachings of Francis. He walks to the sacristy cupboard and pulls open the door. On the door is an image of Francis, bent on one knee, his arms outstretched. Christ, in the form of a seraph, pierces his hands, feet, and side with the wounds of the stigmata. Brother Francis is not scared, he is humbled. He gazes up into the face of Christ and accepts his fate. He is the *alter Christus*, the "other Christ." The friar removes the chalice and the paten from the cabinet and closes the cabinet door. He walks toward the long table in the center of the sacristy and looks up to behold the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalen. The journey of the preparation of the Mass has begun.

Since the early medieval period, sacristies have been integral to the design of church complexes. Although not considered sacred spaces, they serve a supporting, yet vital, role in the performance of the sacred mysteries of the Mass. They are rooms for preparation, both mental and physical. They house liturgical instruments such as chalices, patens, vestments and books and provide space for ceremonial washing and vesting before and after liturgy. In the case of the church of Santa Croce in Florence, the sacristy also functioned as a boundary between the public and private lives of the Franciscan friars that lived within the walls of the convent of Santa Croce.

Located off the south transept of the church, the sacristy is separated from the public worship space by a short hallway. (fig. 10.1) As a room not commonly viewed by the public, it was primarily known only to its patrons and the friars of Santa Croce, particularly those who served as priests, sacristans, and those responsible for the preparation of Mass. For those friars, the imagery that decorated the walls and furniture of the sacristy was designed to reinforce Francis's teachings on the liturgy and the ideals of their order. In essence, the sacristy

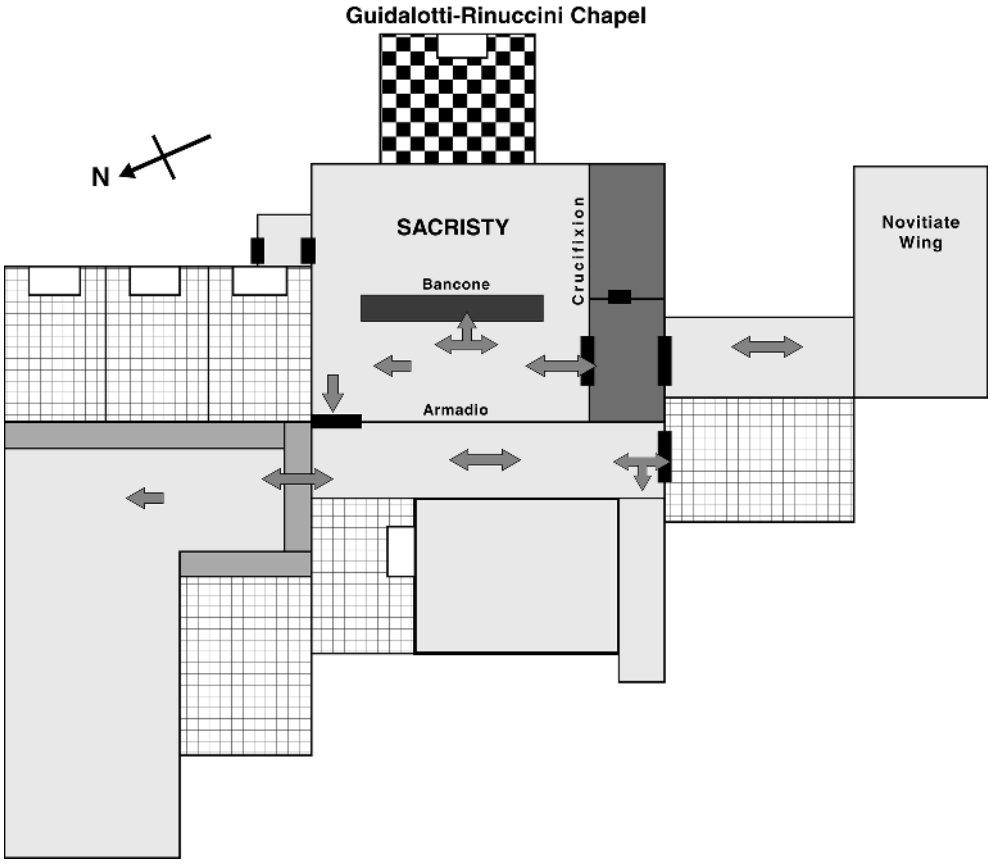

Fig. 10.1 Plan of the flow of the sacristy of Santa Croce, Florence. Drawing: author.

became an interactive instrument to prepare the minds of the friars as they moved throughout the space in preparation for the celebration of the Mass.

Built during a second phase of construction, the sacristy of Santa Croce was not part of the original, late thirteenth-century design of the church. In truth, the origins of its construction are somewhat unclear. No documents exist relating to the construction or patronage of the sacristy. Scholars argue between an early date of 1295–1310 and the 1330s.[1] Patronage has been attributed to the generous donations of

[1] Ena Giurescu,"Trecento Family Chapels in Santa Maria Novella and Santa Croce: Architecture, Patronage, and Competition" (Ph. D. diss., New York University, 1997),

the Peruzzi family whose coat-of-arms are emblazoned in the corners of the room below the roof.[2]

As the diagram in figure 10.1 illustrates, the sacristy of Santa Croce can be entered by two doors—one on the south wall leading from the convent and cloister, and the other at the northwest corner leading into the main church. Covered by a ceiling of wooden beams, the sacristy is a large room that serves as one of the arteries connecting the public worship space with the private convent, primarily the Novitiate wing. (fig. 10.2) Pictorial imagery is limited within this space. In the fourteenth century, it was relegated to only three locations: the *armadio*, or cupboard (labeled A in figure 10.1); the south wall above the entrance to the convent (B); and inside the Guidalotti-Rinuccini Chapel carved out of the east wall (C).

The earliest of this pictorial imagery was the *armadio*, or cupboard, from the 1330s decorated by Taddeo Gaddi (1300–1366) with twenty-six quatrefoil panels paralleling the Life of Christ with the Life of Saint Francis.[3] Thirty years later, in 1366, a fresco of the *Crucifixion* was again painted by Taddeo Gaddi in the center of the south wall above the entrance to the Novitiate and convent. At about the same time, Giovanni da Milano (*c.* 1350–1369), a member of Taddeo's workshop, was commissioned to paint two fresco cycles in the chapel located on the adjacent east wall illustrating the Infancy of the Virgin Mary

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pp. 158–59. The corridor that now runs along side the sacristy, connecting the church with the Chapel of the Novitiate, was lengthened by Michelozzo in 1445 so that it could become more of a passageway between the cloister and the church. For more on the build outs of Santa Croce see Walter and Elizabeth Paatz, *Die Kirchen von Florenz, ein Kunstgeschichtliches Handbuch* 1 (Frankfurt am Main: V. Klostermann, 1952), pp. 559–65.

[2] The Peruzzi enjoyed ownership of another chapel within Santa Croce, adjacent to the Bardi Chapel in the transept. Their desire to build a second burial area in the sacristy was likely not motivated by a need for more burial space, but rather a pious attempt to keep up with the other prominent, Florentine families who enjoyed the ownership of more than one chapel in the church. Andrew Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi: Critical Reappraisal and Catalogue Raisonné* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1982), p. 38. Ladis quotes Giuseppe Richa who notes that construction of the sacristy itself was certainly completed by 1332. A seventeenth-century manuscript about Santa Croce mentions a donation, made in 1327 for the sacristy: "*In 1327. Ionees S. Teodori Diaconis Cardianalis, Apostolice Sedis Legarus concedes Legatus concedes Fratriubu Minoribus Floren,—posse secipone quantitatem 1000 florenorum auri de male acquistiis incestis. Aplicandum Fabrice Eclesie, Sacristie, et Infirmarie- Datum Floren. mouis Junis*" in *Custodia Fiorentina* (1687), fol. 137v. in Giuseppe Richa, *Notizie Istoriche delle Chiese Fiorentine* 1 (Firenze: P.G. Viviani, 1754–62.), p. 56.

[3] The cupboard is now dismantled, but the majority of these panels are still together in the Accademia in Florence. See Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi*, p. 38.

Fig. 10.2 Sacristy of Santa Croce, Florence. Photo: author.

and the Life of Mary Magdalen. Commonly known as the Guidalotti-Rinuccini Chapel, it the only enclosed family burial chapel within this space. In the last decade of the fourteenth century, three other frescoes were added to the *Crucifixion* on the south wall, the *Way to Calvary*, the *Resurrection* and the *Ascension of Christ* by Spinello Aretino (*c.* 1345–1410) and Niccolò di Pietro Gerini (*c.* 1366–1415).[4]

Within this decorative program the figure of St. Francis is repeated in three different locations—the *armadio* panels, the *Crucifixion* and at the entrance to the chapel. These three portraits of Francis aid the viewer in moving throughout the space. From the cupboards that housed liturgical vessels to the walls that surrounded the preparatory space, Francis conveys his message of the importance of the Eucharist and the Pascal sacrifice throughout the sacristy. As their founder Francis is the spiritual guide for the order. His image creates an interactive environment for the Franciscan friars working below who strive to emulate his example.

[4] Giurescu, "Trecento Family Chapels in Santa Maria Novella and Santa Croce," p. 158.

Francis the Eucharist

In one of his last letters to his brethren, Francis wrote with conviction about the importance of the Liturgy to the order.

> [14] In the Lord I also beg all my brothers who are priests, or who will be or who wish to be priests of the Most High, that, when ever they wish to celebrate Mass, being pure, they offer the true Sacrifice of the most holy Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ purely. [17] Remember, my brothers who are priests, what is written of the law of Moses: that whoever committed a transgression against even the externals died without mercy by decree of the Lord. [18] How much greater and severer will be the punishment for the person that tramples on the Son of God, and who treats the blood of the Covenant which sanctified him as if it were not holy, and who insults the Spirit of grace? [21] Listen, my brothers: if the blessed Virgin Mary is so honored, as it is right, since she carried Him in her most holy womb; if the blessed Baptist trembled and did not dare to touch the holy head God; if the tomb in which He lay for some time is so venerated, [22] how holy, just and worthy must be the person who touches Him with hands, received Him in his heart and mouth, and offers Him to others to be received… [23] Look at your dignity, you brothers who are priests, and be holy since He is holy. [24] And as the Lord God has honored you above all other persons because of this ministry, so you should love, reverence and honor Him above all others.[5]

In 1209, when his order was approved by Pope Innocent III, Francis insisted that the Franciscans be given the special privilege of celebrating the ancient Rite of the Roman Church, commonly known as the "Rite of the Apostle Peter," in keeping with his desire for his brothers to live as closely a life to the Apostles as was possible. In 1215, Innocent gave Francis one of the three extant copies of the Sacramentum, Lectionary and Rituale prescribed to this rite.[6] By 1245, the followers of Francis began to circulate the *Missale Regulare*, allowing clergy throughout the order to fulfill their liturgical duties with the dependency on several liturgical books.[7]

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[5] Francis of Assisi, "Letter to the Entire Order" trans. by Regis Armstrong and Ignatius Brady in *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982), pp. 55–58. It is believed that this letter was written after December of 1224 when the Franciscans were given permission by Honorius III to celebrate the Mass inside their churches.

[6] Stephen J.P. Van Dijk, *The Ordinal of the Roman Church* (Fribourg: Fribourg University Press, 1975), pp. XVI–LXIII and Pierre Batifol, *History of the Roman Breviary* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co), pp. 160–64.

[7] Batifol, *History of the Roman Breviary*, pp. 160–64.

The sacristy of Santa Croce held an important function in fulfilling Francis's desire to respect and uphold the sanctity of the Eucharist. The sacristan and the friars that assisted with the preparation of the Mass were responsible for the placement of the liturgical books used in the recitation of the prayers and songs, the lighting of candles in the church, incense for the preservation of sanctity, basins used for ceremonial washing, vestments worn by the celebrants, and most importantly the chalice and the paten used in the consecration of the bread and wine into the Eucharist. As part of this preparatory ritual, the friars were expected to cleanse themselves prior to Mass, both physically and spiritually. First came the act of washing the hands and then vesting.[8] According to Joseph Jungmann, both acts helped to purify the mind and soul before serving before the altar. Washing of the hands helped to leave behind the stain of the outside world and prepare one spiritually for the presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Similarly, vesting became an act where the laying on of robes symbolized the priest leaving behind the terrestrial world in exchange for that of the divine.[9]

The Wall of Eucharistic Sacrifice

The imagery of the sacristy functioned as objects of meditation for the friars moving about the space, preparing their minds for the sacred rite. Along the south wall of the sacristy are four frescoes depicting the *Way to Calvary*, the *Crucifixion*, the *Resurrection* and *Ascension of Christ*, all dating to the mid to late fourteenth century. (fig. 10.3) Placed above the portal leading into the convent, it is the largest, only fully decorated wall in the room. Its size dominates the visual horizon and confronts the viewer. The imagery of the south wall sets the theme for the sacristy—the sacramental function of the Eucharistic gifts and the Christian promise of everlasting life.

In 1366, Taddeo Gaddi painted the earliest fresco, the *Crucifixion*, in the center of the south wall. (fig. 10.4) Andrew Ladis notes that it was the last work Taddeo completed before his death.[10] Almost devotional

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[8] Joseph Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development* I (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1986), pp. 277–78.

[9] Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, I, p. 280.

[10] Because of the strong devotional nature of the fresco, Andrew Ladis has suggested that Taddeo Gaddi's *Crucifixion* might have replaced a historiated crucifix that once hung in the same location. Taddeo died in late 1366, shortly after completing the fresco. In appreciation for his career of service to the friars of Santa Croce he

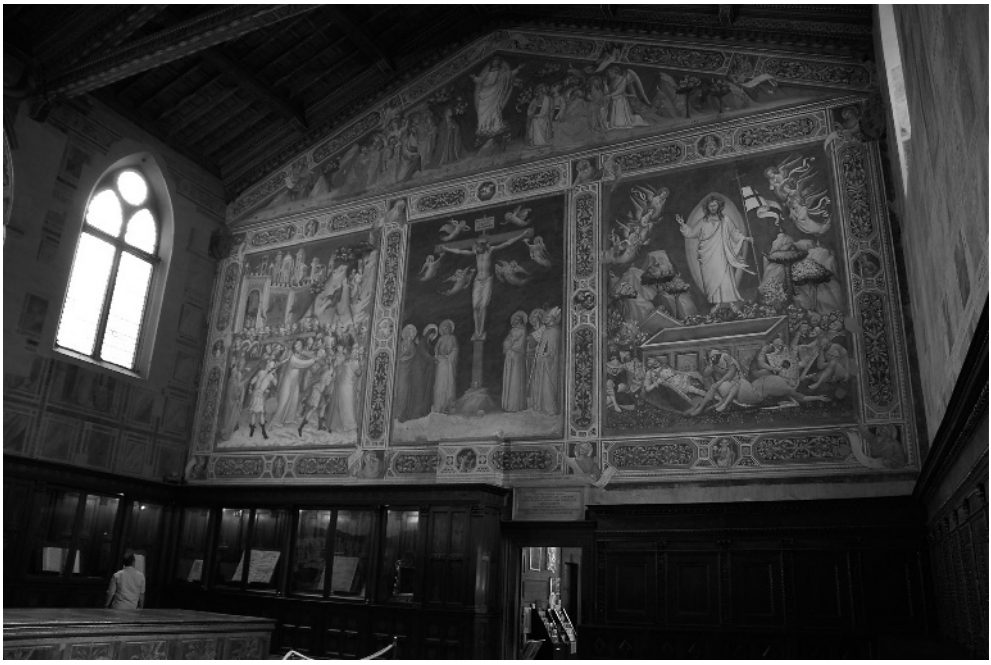

Fig. 10.3 South wall of the sacristy of Santa Croce, Florence. In pediment, the Niccolò di Pietro Gerini, *Ascension of Christ Way to Calvary*, fresco, *c.* 1400. Below, from left to right, Spinello Arentino, *Way to Calvary,* fresco, *c.* 1400; Taddeo Gaddi, *Crucifixion,* fresco, 1366; and Niccolò di Pietro Gerini, *Resurrection,* fresco, *c.* 1400. Photo: author.

in nature, the scene is stark and uncluttered. Set against a dark sky, Christ, his eyes closed and head hung to his right, releases his spirit to His father. At the foot of the cross stand his traditional followers, the Virgin Mary, John and Mary Magdalen. Emotionally restrained, John holds the hand of Christ's mother, who stares down at the foot of the cross, while the Magdalen gently raises her head to view her beloved friend, her arms lifted in horror. On Christ's left side stand three saints, Louis of Toulouse, Henry II, and Francis, who stands at the foot of the cross, his arms laid across his chest in humility and reverence. All three saints look up and guide the viewer's eye to the body of Christ, which is surrounded by six angels who offer the only emotional response in the scene. Reminiscent of Giotto's angels from the *Lamentation* in Padua, they swirl around the body of Christ, in

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was honored with burial within the second cloister of the convent. See Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi*, p. 78.

Fig. 10.4 Taddeo Gaddi, *Crucifixion,* south wall of the sacristy of Santa Croce, Florence, 1366, fresco. Photo: author.

sadness and rage. Three of them swoop in to collect the precious blood that flows from Christ's wounds, an overt reference to the Eucharist. More devotional than narrative in nature, the scene speaks directly to the friars working below, instructing them to treat the Eucharist with reverence as they prepare to celebrate the Mass.

For nearly thirty years the *Crucifixion* stood alone on the south wall of the sacristy until the last decade of the fourteenth century when Spinello Aretino and Niccolò di Pietro Gerini were commissioned to paint three frescoes to frame Taddeo's original composition. To the left of Taddeo's *Crucifixion* Spinello Aretino painted the *Way to Cavalry* and on the right side, Niccolò di Pietro Gerini painted the *Resurrection.* Above the three scenes, in the triangular pediment of the wall, Gerini also painted the *Ascension of Christ.* The iconography refers to the dual function of the room, the sacramental function of the Eucharistic gifts and the Christian promise of everlasting life. The emphasis on the cross is also directly related to the titular dedication of the church, Santa Croce, or holy cross. Among the earliest relics of the church were a piece of the True Cross and a thorn from the crown of thorns given by St. Louis of Toulouse.[11] It is believed that the thorn was given by St. Louis of Toulouse to the Franciscan friars of Florence on a visit he made to their community before his death in 1297. One of the most virtuous and popular of Franciscan saints, Louis's image appears throughout Santa Croce. The son of Charles II, King of Provence and Naples, Louis abdicated the throne in order to join the Franciscans, leaving the powerful crown to his brother, Robert of Anjou.[12] Giuseppe Richa, in his eighteenth-century description of Santa Croce mentions that at one time, possibly during the fourteenth century, the relics were housed inside the *armadi*, or cupboards, of the sacristy. By the sixteenth century, however, they had been dispersed throughout the convent.[13]

The presence of the *Crucifixion* scene refers to the primary function of the room, the preparation for the Eucharistic sacrifice in the Mass. Yet, when seen in context, new meaning comes to light. These three

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[11] Maria Siponta de Salvia, "L'Arredo" in *Santa Croce: La Basilica, Le Cappelle, I Chiostri, Il Museo*, (eds.) Umberto Baldini and Bruno Nardini (Florence: Nardini Editore, Centro Internazionale del Libro per la Banca Toscana, 1983), pp. 329–31.

[12] Emma Gurney-Salter, *Franciscan Legends in Italian Art* (New York, E.P. Dutton & Co., 1905), pp. 173–76.

[13] Richa, *Notizie Istoriche delle Chiese Fiorentine*, p. 75.

additional scenes evoke a rich liturgical meaning. During the Liturgy of the Eucharist, immediately following the washing of the hands, the priest recites the *Anamnesis*, recalling Christ's passion, resurrection, and ascension. It is believed that by summoning these events the congregation relives them and they become present again during the consecration of the Eucharist.[14]

The south wall also alludes to the missionary role of the Franciscan Order. Francis's directive to the order was clear. By the 1320s Franciscan missionaries had been to Africa, the Middle East, India and China.[15] Beginning in 1328, Franciscans friars were sent to the Holy Land to help establish sanctuaries at the sites deemed holy to Christians. By 1336, they became the guardians of four sacred sites—the Holy Sepulcher, the Cenaculum, or place of the Lord's Supper, the sepulcher of the Virgin Mary in the Valley of Jehoshaphat and the Grotto of the Nativity in Bethlehem.[16] The images on the south wall of the sacristy served to remind the friars in far away Florence of their greater duty as an order to preserve the Christian holy sites for pilgrims to the Holy Land and for the posterity of Christianity. Franciscan spirituality emphasized mentally reliving the life of Christ—his teachings, his miracles and his passion. Thus being guardians of the Holy Land had a unique and profound significance for the followers of St. Francis.

The Armadio *and the* "alter Christus"

As the friars of Santa Croce continued their journey through the sacristy, they would have approached the liturgical cupboards on the west

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[14] "Accept, most holy Trinity, this offering which we are making to You in remembrance of the passion, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, our Lord; and in honor of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, Blessed John the Baptist, the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul, and all the Saints; that I may add to their honor and aid our salvation; and may they deign to intercede in heaven for us who honor their memory here on earth. Through Christ our Lord. Amen." See Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, II, pp. 219–21.

[15] William R. Cook, "Giotto and the Figure of Saint Francis" in *The Cambridge Companion to Giotto*, (eds.) Anne Derbes and Mark Sandona (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 144–45. See also Michael Robson, *The Franciscans in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2006), pp. 108–18.

[16] Between 1365 and 1370, conditions in the Holy Land had deteriorated due to the crusade called by Peter I of Cyprus and numerous Franciscans were imprisoned, tortured and killed. By 1372, however, when Saint Bridget of Sweden visited Jerusalem she reported that the Franciscans were back in charge of the holy sites related to Christ's life. See John Moorman, *A History of the Franciscan Order from its origins to the year 1517* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 436–37.

wall of the room. Opening and closing the cupboard doors they bring forth the instruments of the liturgy and the vestments worn during the liturgical celebration. With each motion of opening and closing the doors of the cupboards the friars would have come face to face with the images of St. Francis and of Christ, forming an immediacy rarely seen outside of the interaction between reader and manuscript. Between 1330 and 1350, Taddeo Gaddi was commissioned to create two lunettes and 26 quatrefoil panels to decorate an *armadio*, or cupboard, that once lined the west wall of the sacristy of Santa Croce, opposite the Guidalotti-Rinuccini Chapel.[17] The *armadio*, which was used to store liturgical vestments and vessels, and possibly even the relics of Santa Croce, remained in the sacristy of Santa Croce until 1810 when it was dismantled and its painted panels were dispersed.[18] Sadly, no illustration or physical description of the *armadio* exists, thus leaving the arrangement of the panels up to scholarly debate.[19] The most compelling argument, authored by Andrew Ladis, suggests the quatrefoil panels presented a visual parallel between the Life of Christ and the Life of Saint Francis, reinforcing the belief that Francis was the *alter Christus*, or "other Christ." The theme was a popular one in Franciscan literature of the fourteenth century. One such example is Bartolommeo Rinonico da Pisa's popular *Conformitate* (*c.* 1385), which was comprised of twelve chapters which detailed an aspect of the life or teachings of Christ, followed by a parallel event in the life of St. Francis.[20]

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[17] According to Andrew Ladis, the cupboard panels were likely done immediately following Taddeo's work in the Baroncelli Chapel (*c.* 1328). See Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi*, pp. 114–19.

[18] The cupboard is now dismantled, but the majority of these panels are still together in the Accademia in Florence. See Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi*, p. 38.

[19] Sadly, there are no extant examples of Trecento *armadi.* For more on the cupboards, see Luisa Marcucci, "Per gli 'Armari' della sacrestia di Santa Croce," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen* (1960), pp. 141–58. The cupboards that now line the walls of the sacristy of Santa Croce were a fifteenth-century gift of the Spinelli family to the convent of Santa Croce. They were designed and made by Giovanni di Michele and inlaid with a floral and vase motif. See Philip Jacks and William Caferro, *The Spinelli of Florence: Fortunes of a Renaissance Merchant Family* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2001), pp. 162–65.

[20] Bartolommeo da Pisa, *De conformitate vitae beati Francisci ad vitam domini Jesu* in *Analecta Franciscana* (1906–1912), vols. 4–5. Bartolommeo's contribution to the Order was so valued that at the 1399 meeting of the meeting of the Chapter General he was awarded with a gift of a habit that had belonged to the saint. See also Moorman, *History of the Franciscan Order*, pp. 396–97.

According to Andrew Ladis, the twenty-six quatrefoils paralleling the Life of Christ with the Life of Saint Francis were arranged in two, long horizontal rows with the Christological panels on top and the Franciscan panels below.[21] The pairings went as follows: [1] *Visitation* and *Saint Francis Renouncing His Earthly Possessions;* [2] *Adoration of the Shepherds* and the *Crib at Greccio;* [3] *Adoration of the Magi* and the *Dream of Innocent III;* [4] *Presentation in the Temple* and the *Approval of the Rule;* [5] *Christ among the Doctors* and *Francis before Honorius III;* [6] *Baptism of the Lord* and the *Trial by Fire;* [7] *Transfiguration* and the *Vision of Saint Francis in the Fiery Chariot;* [8] *Last Supper* and the *Death of the Knight of Celano;* [9] *Crucifixion* and the *Stigmatization of Saint Francis;* [10] *Resurrection* and the *Resurrection of a Dead Child;* [11] *Apparition to the Three Maries in the Garden* and the *Apparition at Arles;* [12] *Incredulity of Thomas* and the *Incredulity of Girolamo;* [13] *Pentecost* and the *Martyrdom of Franciscans at Ceuta*.[22]

The Francis panels are modeled largely on the *Legend of Saint Francis* cycle from the Upper Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi. Of note are two quatrefoils that speak directly to the interactive theme of the sacristy. The first is the *Crib at Greccio*, which recalls an episode in the life of the saint where Francis sees a vision of the birth of Christ while attending Mass in Greccio and begins to recreate a live nativity scene there in the church. (fig. 10.5) In the scene, St. Francis kneels in the lower right of the panel, cradling the infant Jesus. Taddeo's interpretation of the scene is unique in many respects. Francis, who is most commonly seen in his brown friar's tunic, is here dressed as a deacon in a dalmatic, or ecclesiastical vestment, such as would be found inside

[21] The cupboard panels were constructed from poplar and walnut. In addition to the twenty-six quatrefoils there were also two lunettes. The lunettes join together in the middle to create one large lunette with the *Ascension of Christ*, on the left, and the *Annunciation* on the right. Together they mark Christ's departure and arrival on earth. See Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi*, pp. 114–16.

[22] In October of 1227, Franciscan missionaries led by Friar Daniel to the city of Ceuta in Spanish North Africa were tried and executed for preaching Christianity and blaspheming the name of Muhammad. The scene represents a thirst for martyrdom that was rampant in the 13th century and one that was especially promoted during the reign of Bonaventure, who served as minister general of the order from 1257–74. See John Victor Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), p. 219.

Fig. 10.5 Taddeo Gaddi, *Crib at Greccio, c.* 1330, Florence, Galleria dell'Accademia, painted wood, 47.8 × 43 cm. Photo: Art Resource, NY.

the *armadio*.[23] Although, this is shared in the San Francesco prototype of the scene, the composition of the scene has been altered dramatically. In the cupboard quatrefoil, St. Francis and the Christ child are marginalized and relegated to the lower right of the panel. On the left, occupying the greatest amount of space in the composition is a depiction of the liturgy, with two priests, dressed in full vestments standing before the altar consecrating the Eucharist. In plain view are the crucifix and the chalice, objects both commonly found in *armadio*.

In the ninth Franciscan panel, the *Stigmatization of Saint Francis*, the saint appears in the lower left of the panel, kneeling down, arms outstretched looking up at the image of Christ in the form of a seraph. (fig. 10.6) Francis is stoic, not frightened, as his hands, feet and side are pierced with the wounds of Christ. He is a model for all friars. According to Ladis, the panel was paired above with a depiction of the *Crucifixion*, (fig. 10.7) thematically linking the two scenes. Like the *Crucifixion* above on the south wall, it is a simplified scene. Christ, head bowed on the cross, stands between His mother on his right and John the Evangelist on his left. From Christ's side spouts blood from his wound. Mary reaches out with her hands to catch the sacred blood. She is transformed into the chalice, gathering the sacred blood. In both scenes, the emphasis is on the wounds of sacrifice, reenacted during the Mass and consecration of the Eucharist.

The Bancone *and the Two Maries*

Once the friars have acquired their liturgical instruments and vestments, they move to the center of the sacristy. There lies a large *bancone*, or table, used as a workspace by the friars as they prepare for Mass. Upon it they lay the liturgical instruments stored in the cupboards—the chalice and the paten, the lectionary, the incense and the vestments that will worn by the clergy. Here they pour the wine and prepare the bread that will be transformed in the body and blood of Christ in the consecration of the Eucharist. The *bancone* sits atop the

[23] A dalmatic is a vestment traditionally worn by deacons that resembles a surplice. St. Francis was never ordained a priest. Among his followers there was a clear delineation that not all Franciscans had to become priests.

Fig. 10.6 Taddeo Gaddi, *Stigmatization of St. Francis, c.* 1330, Florence, Galleria dell'Accademia, painted wood, 47.8 × 43 cm. Photo: Art Resource NY.

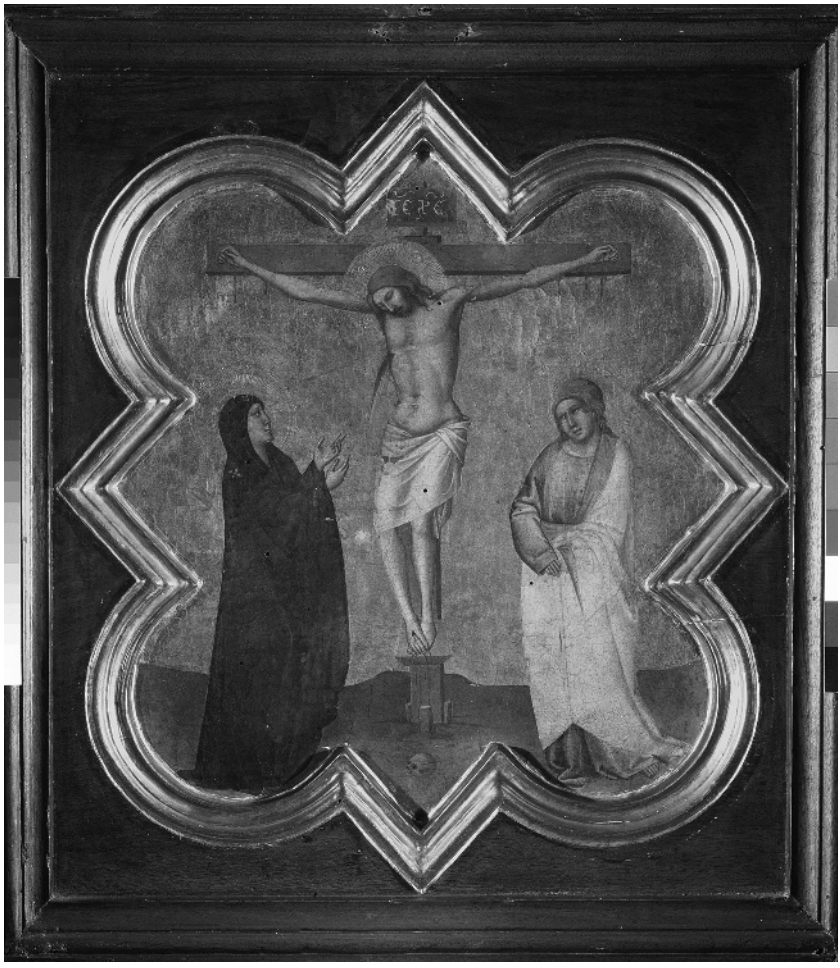

Fig. 10.7 Taddeo Gaddi, *Crucifixion, c.* 1330, Florence, Galleria dell'-Accademia, painted wood, 47.7 × 43.6 cm. Photo: Art Resource NY.

Peruzzi tomb, in the center of the floor.[24] Oriented towards the east wall and centered in the room, the table faces the Guidalotti-Rinuccini Chapel. The placement of the *bancone* is significant. As the friars conduct their preparations for the liturgy they stand behind the *bancone* with their backs to the cupboards and their gaze confronted by images of the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalen in the chapel. Illuminated by two lancet windows it is the brightest area of the sacristy and a visual focal point for the friars below. On either side of the friars are the lives of the two most important women in Christ's life—his mother, Mary, and his faithful companion, Mary Magdalen. In a Franciscan context the Virgin Mary represented the model of purity and humility serving to remind the friars of their role as spiritual models to the public. On the opposite wall, Mary Magdalen echoed the theme of penance and the purpose of life within the convent—meditation, prayer and penance.

As one of the last private chapels purchased in Santa Croce, the chapel was acquired posthumously by Lapo di Lizio Guidalotti who died around 1350.[25] Little is known of Guidalotti, although according to his will and testament, he instructed that a sum of seven hundred florins be entrusted to the *Società di Santa Maria dell'Orto a Orsanmichele*, a charitable organization, for the purchase and decoration of a private burial chapel in Santa Croce in his honor.[26] According to Ugo

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[24] In 1530, when the city of Florence was under siege by the Imperial army, the friars emptied the Peruzzi tomb and used it to hide the precious treasury of the church. Found in a book on the Peruzzi, the monks were believed to have emptied the tomb in the middle of the sacristy and hid in there all the precious objects from the treasury. (BNCF, Rosselli, fol.257) in Giurescu, "Trecento Family Chapels in Santa Maria Novella and Santa Croce," p. 159. In addition, Thirty years after the siege, on the twelfth of March 1564, the body of Michelangelo was laid on the long central cabinet of the sacristy after being brought from Rome after his death while awaiting final funeral services in San Lorenzo. For more on Michelangelo's funeral see Rudolf Wittkower, *The Divine Michelangelo* (London: Phaidon Publishers, 1964).

[25] For the earliest work on the Rinuccini Chapel see Mina Gregori, *Giovanni da Milano alla Capella Rinuccini* (Milan: Fratelli Fabbri, 1965). See also Michelle Erhardt, "Two Faces of Mary: Franciscan Thought and Post-Plague Patronage in the Trecento Fresco Decoration of the Guidalotti-Rinuccni Chapel of Santa Croce, Florence" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 2004).

[26] The only clue to Guidalotti's involvement in the decoration of the chapel was his instruction that a sum of ten florins be set aside annually for the celebration of the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin in his honor. No evidence, however, survives as to a connection between the choice of Mary Magdalen and the donor. For more on issues of patronage and Santa Croce see Ena Giurescu, "Trecento Family Chapels in Santa Maria Novella and Santa Croce: Architecture, Patronage and Competition," (Ph.D. diss, NYU, 1997), pp. 158–59.

Procacci, because the purchase of the chapel took place over a decade after the patron died the responsibility of awarding the decoration contract would have fallen to the Franciscan custodian of the convent of Santa Croce, Lodovico di Giovanni.[27] It is unknown, however, how much involvement he had in designing the layout of the program, or to what extent he directed Giovanni da Milano in the execution of the frescoes.[28]

Around 1363, Giovanni da Milano, a Lombard painter associated with the workshop of Taddeo Gaddi, was contracted to paint the chapel. It is worth noting that at the same time that the arrangements for the purchase and decoration of the chapel were being made Taddeo and his workshop were painting the *Crucifixion* on the south wall of the sacristy. Sadly, however, shortly after beginning the project, the funds for its decoration were exhausted and Giovanni abandoned the chapel, completing only the vault and the first two registers of the fresco cycles. The chapel remained unfinished and without a patron until 1370, when it was sold to Francesco Rinuccini, a rising Florentine diplomat and prominent international trader. Rinuccini hired a second artist, Matteo di Pacino, a member of Orcagna's circle, to complete the third and final register of frescoes. Rinuccini subsequently hired Giovanni del Biondo to paint an altarpiece and installed the *cancello* inscribed with the chapel's dedication to the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalen, and his grandfather, Lapo Rinuccini.[29]

Giovanni da Milano lined the soffit of the chapel's outer arch, above the cancello, with portrait busts of the Twelve Apostles, spiritual models for the friars. (fig. 10.8) Each apostle holds in his hand a scroll inscribed with a line from the Apostles' Creed.[30] The prayer begins

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[27] "*…l'allogagione degli affreschi fu fatta, al nostro pittore, dal frescesco Lodovico di Giovanni, custode del convento di S. Croce…*" It is believed that this decision was made despite the fact that payment for the decoration of the chapel was made through the Company of Orsanmichele. See Procacci, "Il Primo Ricordo," p. 52.

[28] From the visual evidence, the chapel's second patrons, the Rinuccini, appear more active, possibly influencing the final completion of the program after they acquired the chapel in the later 1370–71.

[29] See Michelle A. Erhardt, "Two Faces of Mary: Franciscan Thought and Post-Plague Patronage in the Trecento Fresco Decoration of the Guidalotti-Rinuccini Chapel of Santa Croce, Florence" (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 2004), pp. 24–60.

[30] Although dating to the fourth to fifth centuries, during the Middle Ages the Creed was believed to have originated on Pentecost when the Twelve were gathered together. While inspired by the Holy Spirit, the Apostles spontaneously recited the tenets of their faith in the form of a credo with each one contributing a phrase to the prayer. See George Kaftal, *Iconography of the Saints in Tuscan Painting* (Florence: Sansoni, 1952), pp. 35, 137, 503, 507, 725, 729, 799, 841, 939.

Fig. 10.8 Giovanni da Milano, *St. Francis, the Twelve Apostles holding scrolls of the Credo,* and *St. Louis of Toulouse,* Guidalotti-Rinuccini Chapel, Santa Croce, Florence, *c.* 1363–1371, fresco. Photo: author.

at the apex of the arch with the portrait bust of St. Peter who holds a scroll reading, "*Credo in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, Creatorem caeli et terrae*" (I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth) and follows down the five remaining busts on the north wall before continuing again with the image of St. John the Evangelist at the apex of the south side of the soffit.[31] As a liturgical reference, the creed, recited just prior to the Liturgy of the Eucharist in

[31] *Credo in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, Creatorem caeli et terrae, Et in Iesum Christum, Filium eius unicum, Dominum nostrum, qui coneptus est de Spiritu Sancto, natus ex Maria Virgine, passus sub Pontion Pilato, crucifixus, mortuus, et sepultus, descendit ad inferos, tertia die resurrexit a mortuis, ascendit ad caelos, decet ad dexteram Dei Patris omnipotentis, inde venturus est iudicare vivos et mortuos, Credo in Spiritum Sanctum, sanctam Ecclesiam catholican, sanctorum communionem, remissionem peccatorum, carnis resurrectionem, vitam aeternam. Amen.* I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty. From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

the Mass, is a profession of one's faith. It publicly reiterates the belief in the Holy Trinity and verbally reenacts the passion of Christ.

The apostles are accompanied in the jambs by four Franciscan saints—St. Francis and St. Anthony of Padua on the north and St. Louis of Tolouse and Blessed Andrea of Anagni, a local saint, on the south. As the founders of the order, these Franciscan saints serve as tangible role models to the friars working below. Saints Francis and Louis aid in guiding the friar's gaze from below at the *bancone.* On the left, St. Francis stands with his body turned away from the viewer, his cloak pulled away to reveal his stigmata. He stands in awe of the Virgin Mary before him. (fig. 10.9) The Virgin Mary is the Immaculate Conception and the protectress of their order. Before Francis are five scenes portraying the Virgin's infancy and childhood up to the Annunciation. Opposite Francis stands Louis of Toulouse. Here Louis is shown wearing his Franciscan habit (absent of his cope) with a bishop's mitre atop his head and a crozier in his left hand.[32] Louis also twists his body away from the viewer and leads their gaze to five scenes from the Life of Mary Magdalen, the penitent of the order. (fig. 10.10) All four of these figures—Francis, Louis, the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalen, are repeated in the sacristy decoration. Together they stand on the south wall at the foot of the cross witnessing Christ's most precious sacrifice. Now, on the east wall of the chapel, they act as emissaries opening the dialogue of the lives of the Virgin and Mary Magdalen, spiritual models for the order.

Outside scenes of the *Crucifixion*, the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalen are rarely paired together in art of the late medieval period. The Guidalotti-Rinuccini Chapel is one of the rare exceptions. When viewed together, the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalen symbolize the two most important women in Christ's life—his mother and his faithful companion. Both were important harbingers of Christ's human and divine natures—the Virgin Mary was the first to witness his birth and announced the coming of the Messiah, and Mary Magdalen was the first witness to his Resurrection and announced the arrival of the

[32] Although he begrudgingly accepted the position of Bishop of Toulouse it was short lived because he died at the age of twenty-six in 1297 and canonized only twenty years later thanks to the influence of his brother, King Robert of Naples. For the classic study of the iconography of Louis of Toulouse, particularly the panel done by Simone Martini of St. Louis of Toulouse Crowning Robert of Anjou (Naples, Capodimonte Museum) see Julian Gardner, "Saint Louis of Toulouse, Robert of Anjou and Simone Martini," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 39 (1976), pp. 12–33.

Fig. 10.9 Giovanni da Milano, *Infancy of the Virgin Mary* (north wall), *St. Francis Revealing his Stigmata* and *St. Anthony of Padua* (jamb), Guidalotti-Rinuccini Chapel, Santa Croce, Florence, 1363–71, fresco. Photo: author.

Savior.[33] Juxtaposed on the walls of this chapel, they also represent the two most popular and venerated female saints in the medieval period. The Franciscan writer Bonaventure in his *Tree of Life*, a devotional work based upon the *Lignum vitae*, used the Virgin and the Magdalen as the model instruments through whom one should emulate when meditating upon the passion.[34] He writes at the end of the Eighth Fruit: Victory in the Conflict Over Death:

[33] Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, *The Place of Narrative: Mural Decoration in Italian Churches, 431–1600* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 90–92.

[34] For more on the relationship between the Tree of Life and its meaning in Franciscan spirituality see Rab Hatfield, "The Tree of Life and the Holy Cross:

Fig. 10.10 Giovanni da Milano, *Life of Mary Magdalen* (south wall), *St. Louis of Toulouse* and *Blessed Andrea of Anagni* (jamb), Guidalotti-Rinuccini Chapel, Santa Croce, Florence, 1363–71, fresco. Photo: author.

O my God, good Jesus,
Although I am in every way without merit and unworthy,
Grant to me,
Who did not merit to be present at these events,
In the body, that I may ponder them faithfully in my mind
And experience toward you, my God crucified and put to death for me,

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Franciscan Spirituality in the Trecento and the Quattrocento" in *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, (eds.) Timothy Verdon and John Henderson. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990), pp. 132–60.

> That feeling of compassion which your innocent mother and
> The penitent Magdalene experienced at the very hour of your passion.[35]

The north wall of the Guidalotti-Rinuccini Chapel is illustrated with five scenes from the Infancy of the Virgin, or Mary's life before the birth of Christ. The cycle begins in the lunette with *Joachim's Expulsion from the Temple*, followed by *Joachim's Dream in the Desert* with the *Meeting at the Golden Gate* and the *Birth of the Virgin* in the second register; and lastly, the *Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple* and the *Marriage of the Virgin* in the third register. Franciscan devotion to the Virgin dates back to its founding when St. Francis first gathered with his band of followers at Santa Maria degli Angeli in the Portiuncula of Assisi. The church, dedicated to the Virgin Mary, was the place where Francis first heard God call him to a life of poverty and where he would later found the Order of the Friars Minor.[36] Throughout his life, Francis was deeply connected to this church, believing its patron saint, the Virgin Mary, held vigil over his minion of poor brothers.

Scenes from the Infancy of the Virgin were popular in early fourteenth-century Italy, especially among Franciscans. Some of the earliest examples in monumental painting are found in the Franciscan mother church of San Francesco in Assisi where around 1280 Cimabue painted four scenes from the Infancy of the Virgin in the choir of the upper basilica—the *Annunciation of Joachim, the Birth of the Virgin, the Presentation in the Temple* and *the Marriage of the Virgin*.[37] By the early fourteenth century, a complete illustration of the Infancy cycle was chronicled in twelve scenes by Giotto in the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua (1305–09). Giotto's cycle had a profound impact upon Italian art, inspiring numerous Infancy cycles including the Baroncelli Chapel

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[35] Bonaventure, *The Soul's Journey into God. The Tree of Life. The Life of St. Francis*, trans. Ewert Cousins (New York and Toronto: Paulist Press, 1978), p. 158. The importance of devotional treatises such as this one are reflected in the fact that the Franciscan friars of Santa Croce had Taddeo Gaddi paint a version of this scene in the refectory of the convent in the 1360s. The image shows Christ crucified, not on a cross, but upon a tree with twelve medallions hanging from it like fruit from twelve branches. Inscriptions and pictures allude to the Creation and Fall of Man, and the life, death and glorification of Christ.

[36] Regis Armstrong and Ignatius Brady, *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982), p. 149.

[37] Gianfranco Malafarina, *La Basilica di San Franesco di Assisi* (Modena: Franco Panini, 2005), pp. 184–92. Jacqueline Lafontaine-Disogne, *Iconographie de l'Enfance de la Vierge dans l'Empire byzantin et en Occident* (Bruxelles: Palais des Académies, 1992), pp. 26–27.

(1328–1330) by Taddeo Gaddi, also in Santa Croce, which is commonly accepted as the source for Guadalotti-Rinuccini cycle. There are no Biblical sources for any of these early Marian scenes, instead what is known of her life derives from the apocryphal writings of Pseudo-Matthew and the Proto-Evangelicum of James, which were later transcribed into the *Golden Legend*.[38] It should be noted that the Guidalotti-Rinuccini cycle is unusual because it stands alone in having no reference to the Annunciation, a standard scene in Marian Infancy cycles.[39]

Of note is the manner in which the Marian scenes are presented to emphasize Eucharistic themes. The lunette, which depicts the *Expulsion of Joachim from the Temple*, illustrates the rejection of Mary's father from the temple in Jerusalem when it is found out that he and his wife, Anna, are without children. Although modeled on the Baroncelli cycle, this image is different. Set entirely within a gothic arcade, here the expulsion fills the entire lunette. Joachim stands in the center, cradling his lamb like a rejected child as he is ushered out by the temple priest. As he is being expunged from the setting, rows of worshippers appear on either side of him, bringing forth their lambs for sacrifice. Although to some eyes this forms a simple backdrop to the scene, in truth it is rich with liturgical metaphor. The lamb is a traditional metaphor for Christ's sacrifice on the cross. On the left, men raise their lambs in the air towards the altar, while on the right sides they kneel, heads bowed down in reverence. This choreographed action is reminiscent of the elevation and reverence of the Eucharist in the liturgy at the moment the bread, the Lamb of God, is consecrated.

Below is another key image of the cycle, the *Meeting at the Golden Gate.* After Joachim's expulsion he flees in disgrace to the desert. In a dream an angel comes to him foretelling of Mary's birth and Joachim and Anna reunite in front of the Golden Gate of Jerusalem. Elated by the news that God will bless them with a baby, the couple exchange a

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[38] Lafontaine-Disogne, *Iconographie*, pp. 9–16.

[39] The most compelling argument for the absence of the Annunciation in the program is Giovanni da Milano's fidelity to the cycle of the same subject by Taddeo Gaddi in the Baroncelli Chapel (*c.* 1328), just steps away in the right transept of Santa Croce. Giovanni, who Vasari notes as being a member of Taddeo Gaddi's workshop, copied almost exactly the east wall of Taddeo's cycle, which begins with Joachim's Expulsion and ends with the Marriage of the Virgin. In the Baroncelli, the Annunciation is the lead scene on the adjacent south wall, which continues with scenes from the Infancy of Christ. For more on the Baroncelli Chapel, see Ladis, *Taddeo Gaddi*, pp. 88–112.

tender, but chaste embrace, at which time Mary is conceived in Anna's womb. For the Franciscans, the image was the most perfect illustration of Mary's Immaculate Conception, a controversial dogma strongly supported by the Franciscan Order.[40] In the fourteenth century, the Friars Minor played a critical role in the evolution of the doctrine—the belief that that Virgin Mary was so pure that she herself was born without the stain of original sin.[41] This emphasis on the purity of Mary was paramount to the Franciscan understanding of Eucharist. Recalling the final letter that Francis wrote to this brethren, "Listen, my brothers: if the blessed Virgin Mary is so honored, as it is right, since she carried Him in her most holy womb;…how holy, just and worthy must be the person who touches Him with hands, received Him in his heart and mouth, and offers Him to others to be received…"[42]

As the north wall illustrates the Virgin Mary as the model of purity, the south wall of the Guidalotti-Rinuccini Chapel presents Mary Magdalen as the model of redemption. As one of the rare depictions of the Life of Mary Magdalen in the fourteenth century, the south wall illustrates five scenes from the saint's life. The cycle begins in the lunette with the *Anointing of the Magdalen* depicting the Magdalen's conversation at Christ's feet; followed by *Christ in the Home of Mary and Martha in Bethany* and the *Raising of Lazarus* in the second register; and lastly, the *Noli Me Tangere* and the *Magdalen's Miracle of Marseilles*, a less known image from her Provençal legend in the third register.

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[40] Michelle A. Erhardt, "The Immaculate Kiss Beneath the Golden Gate: The Influence of John Duns Scotus on Florentine Painting of the 14th Century," *Franciscan Studies* 66 (2008), pp. 269–80.

[41] Franciscan theologian John Duns Scotus (d. 1308) was the most vocal advocate of the doctrine arguing that Mary was protected by a unique grace from God that preserved her from contracting original sin and allowed her to be conceived immaculately. In his commentaries on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, Scotus argued that Christ, as the perfect Redeemer, was capable of exempting his Mother from original sin before her birth. See Hilda Graef, *Mary: A History of Doctrine and Devotion* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1964), pp. 282–300. Among Scotus's defenses of the doctrine is the following, "One reason is the excellence of her Son, Who as Universal Redeemer opened the gate of heaven to all. But if the Blessed Virgin had not contracted original sin, she would not have needed a Redeemer. Nor would He have opened the gate to her, because it would not have been closed to her. For it is not closed except on account of sin, and more especially, original sin." Transcribed in Berard Vogt, *Duns Scotus: Defender of the Immaculate Conception* (Paterson, NJ: St. Anthony Guild Press, 1955), p. 14.

[42] Francis of Assisi, "Letter to the Entire Order," pp. 55–58.

In the medieval period, the Magdalen was recognized as an amalgam of three different New Testament women—the sinner from Luke's Gospel who washed Christ's feet with her tears, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, and finally the trusted companion of Jesus and witness to his Resurrection.[43] An enigmatic and powerful figure in this era, Mary Magdalen's rise in popularity paralleled the establishment of her cult in France in 1279 when Charles II, King of Provence and Naples, claimed to discover the Magdalen's true relics at Saint-Maximin.[44] Her cult spread quickly to Italy where she became a symbol of penance and spiritual redemption.

Although Mary Magdalen was commonly included in fourteenth-century images of the *Crucifixion* and in small devotional panels and altarpieces, large-scale fresco cycles devoted exclusively to her are extremely rare in this period. Only two other contemporary fresco cycles depicting her legend are known in this region of Italy. The first is in the Magdalen Chapel in the lower church of San Francesco in Assisi (*c*. 1320), the mother church of the Franciscan Order. The other is the Magdalen Chapel in the Palazzo del Podestà (or city jail) in Florence (*c*. 1320–30) where on the eve of their execution, condemned prisoners spent their last night surrounded by images of the Magdalen praying for the repentance of their souls.[45]

Embedded in the cycle are themes that speak directly to Franciscan ideology of the period. *The Anointing*, in the south lunette, depicts the Magdalen's conversion at the feet of Christ and marks the beginning of her penitent life.[46] According to the Gospel of Luke, she threw

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[43] In September of 591, Pope Gregory preached a homily in San Clemente in Rome that established the Magdalen as a fusion of three Gospel figures. Gregory proclaimed, "We believe that this woman (Mary Magdalen) whom Luke calls a female sinner, whom John calls Mary, is that Mary from whom Mark says seven demons were cast out." Gregory the Great, *Homily XXXIII, PL LXXVI*, col. 1239 quoted in Susan Haskins, *Mary Magdalen, Myth and Metaphor* (New York: Riverhead Books, 1993), pp. 94–95.

[44] *Flores chronicorum seu catalogus pontificum Romanorum*, cited in Katherine Jansen, *Making of the Magdalen: Preaching and Popular Devotion in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 308–309.

[45] For more on the Magdalen Chapel in Assisi see Lorraine Schwartz, "The Fresco Decoration of the Magdalen Chapel in the Basilica of St. Francis at Assisi." (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1980). For more on the Magdalen Chapel in the Palazzo del Podestà see Janis Elliott, "The Judgment of the Commune: The Frescoes of the Magdalen Chapel in Florence," *Zeitschrift fur Kunstgeschichte* 61/4 (1998), pp. 509–19.

[46] What is also interesting is that the scene is also represented a second time in Santa Croce, in the refectory as part of Taddeo Gaddi's illustration of the *Tree of*

herself at the feet of Christ, begging for forgiveness for her sinful past. With her tears she washed Christ's feet and then proceeded to dry them with her long, flowing hair. According to Luke's gospel, at the moment Christ blessed her, her sins were forgiven and seven demons flew from her body, freeing her from her sinful ways.[47]

The Franciscan connection to the Magdalen is profound. Her association with penance was central to her devotion by the Franciscans.[48] Mary Magdalen is the ideal penitent, and like her St. Francis made regular penance a priority among his followers. Francis believed that by preaching the story of his own spiritual conversion and redemption, he could inspire others to leave behind their lives of materialism in favor of a life of penitence and prayer. Thomas of Celano records: "(Francis) began to preach penance to all with great fervor of spirit and joy of mind, edifying his hearers with his simple words and his greatness of heart. His words were like a burning fire, penetrating the inmost reaches of the heart, and it filled the minds of all the hearers with admiration."[49]

In 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council, led by Innocent III, decreed in canon twenty-one, *omnis utriusque sexus*, that in order to participate in Holy Communion, every member of the Church was obliged to make annual confession of his or her sins. To this obligation was

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Life (*c.* 1360), a mystical treatise attributed to Bonaventure. The *Anointing* surrounds the central image of the Christ crucified on the *Tree of Life* along with three other images from the lives of saints important to the Franciscan Order—*Saint Benedict in Solitude*, a scene from the *Life of Louis of Toulouse*, and the *Stigmatization of Saint Francis*. The refectory was used as the main meal room for the friars and contained images intended to inspire meditation during communal meals. In the refectory of Santa Croce Taddeo Gaddi places Mary Magdalen in the center of the composition, but unlike the previous depictions, she reaches out to Christ who is now placed on her right. See Michelle Erhardt, "Two Faces of Mary: Franciscan Thought and Post-Plague Patronage in the Trecento Fresco Decoration of the Guidalotti-Rinuccini Chapel of Santa Croce, Florence." (Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 2004), pp. 153–54.

[47] Luke 8:1–3. "(1) After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, (2) and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; (3) Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod›s household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means." (Luke 8:2)

[48] Thomas of Celano, *Second Life of St. Francis*, trans. Placid Hermann, *St. Francis of Assisi: First and Second Life of St. Francis with selections from The Treatise on the Miracles of the Blessed Francis*, (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 2000), p. 340.

[49] Thomas of Celano, *First Life of Saint Francis*, trans. Placid Hermann, *St. Francis of Assisi: First and Second Life of St. Francis with selections from The Treatise on the Miracles of the Blessed Francis*, (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 2000), p. 23.

added the necessity of fulfilling the penance or satisfaction imposed by one's priest. The sanction ordered excommunication and forbade Christian burial to those who did not comply.[50] Of note is that fact that in 1212, when St. Francis went to Rome to request Innocent III's approval of the order, Innocent gave the friars permission to preach on the condition that they limit their preaching to the theme of repentance.[51] A letter written by Francis at the end of his life records his feelings on the subject: "In all your sermons you shall tell the people of the need to do penance, impressing upon them that no one can be saved unless he receives the Body and Blood of our Lord."[52]

The scene further illustrates something central to the preparation of the Mass—the ceremonial washing, or ablution, that is part of the ritual of the Liturgy of the Eucharist. The ablution of sins from the body was an important component of preparation for the consecration of the Eucharist. As Mary washes Christ's feet, she not only washes away the dust of the earth but she washes away her own sins, an act which is replicated by the friars in the room below. Working beneath the images of the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalen created a specific iconographic program that spoke to specific Franciscan themes. The Virgin Mary, portrayed as the model of purity and humility, is juxtaposed with the life of the passionate and repentant sinner, Mary Magdalen. Together, these two subjects echo the central themes of fourteenth-century Franciscan theology—salvation through chastity and penance.

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[50] *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, trans. Norman Tanner, 2 vols., (Washington, D.C.: Sheed and Ward, 1990) cited in Jansen, *Making of the Magdalen*, p. 199. For a discussion on the role of sacramental confession in the Renaissance see Thomas Tentler, *Sin and Confession on the Eve of the Reformation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977).

[51] See Thomas of Celano, *First Life*, p. 33. For a discussion of penance and its proliferation by the mendicants as well as its affect upon lay confraternities see John Hederson, "Penitence and the Laity in Fifteenth-Century Florence," in *Christianity and the Renaissance: Image and Religious Imagination in the Quattrocento*, (eds.) Timothy Verdon and John Henderson (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1990), pp. 229–249. See also Anna Benvenuti-Papi, "I Frati della Panitenza nella Società Fiorentina del Due-Trecento," *I Frati Penitenti di San Franceso nella Società del Due e Trecento*, ed. Mariano d'Alatri (Rome: Instituto Storico dei Cappuccini, 1977), pp. 191–213.

[52] *St. Francis of Assisi: Writings and Early Biographies, English Omnibus of Sources for the Life of St. Francis*, ed. Marion Habig (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983), p. 113 found in Katherine Ludwig Jansen, "Mary Magdalen and the Mendicants: The Preaching of Penance in the Late Middle Ages," *Journal of Medieval History* 21/1 (1995), p. 4.

Viewed as a whole, the decoration of the sacristy of Santa Croce comes alive with meaning when considered in the context of the everyday use of the space. By evaluating the choice of subjects, the location of the images and the physical movement of the friars within the space, subtle changes in iconography are revealed bringing to life the religious experience of the medieval friars of Santa Croce. Although the sacristy itself is not a sacred space, it is a place of ritual preparation and meditation, where friars draw the sacred into themselves in order to become more perfect vessels of God's grace as they enact the rituals of the Divine Liturgy.

With St. Francis as their guide, the friars move through the sacristy reading and contemplating the images of Christ's passion, the life of their founder and salvation brought through chastity and penance. From the cupboards they remove vestments and vessels and place them on the table in the center of the room. There they wash and purify themselves, taking on the veil of their vestments as they prepare the bread and wine for the mystical transformation into the body and blood of Christ. In essence, the sacristy of Santa Croce became an interactive instrument to prepare the minds of the friars as they moved throughout the space in preparation for the celebration of the Mass.

11. PARALLELISM IN GIOTTO'S SANTA CROCE FRESCOES

Jane C. Long

Giotto's fresco cycles are properly analyzed as complex constructions that require the viewers' active participation. Individual frescoes do not stand as isolated narratives but interact with the scenes that surround them to allow viewers to make a variety of connections between events depicted by the artist and so draw diverse meanings from his cycles as a whole. This approach to cycle design—termed parallelism—has long been seen as characteristic of Giotto. In the Scrovegni Chapel at Padua, for example, Christ's *Nativity* is directly above the *Last Supper*, and the two scenes have similar architectural arrangements and compositions, creating parallels that may remind the viewer that these events, widely separated in time, both represent the mystery of the Incarnation. Similarly, in the Peruzzi Chapel at Santa Croce in Florence Giotto placed the *Annunciation to Zacharias* across a narrow space from *St. John on Patmos* to relate these previsions in the lives of two saints who were personally associated with Christ.[1] Yet merely to say scenes are related is a rather vague concept, and explanations of the messages Giotto conveyed through the use of parallelism in his fresco cycles vary widely among art historians. So, two art historians looking at the *St. Francis Cycle* at Santa Croce might agree that the *Appearance at Arles* on the left wall of the Bardi Chapel corresponds to the *Trial by Fire* on the right wall, but one might conclude that this parallel indicates that Francis is the *alter Christus*, while a second may contend that the two scenes represent different aspects of the Franciscan apostolate.[2]

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[1] The centrality of parallelism to the design of Giotto's fresco cycles was first proposed for Padua by Michel Alpatoff, "The Parallelism of Giotto's Paduan Frescoes" *The Art Bulletin* 29 (1947), pp. 149–54; and for Santa Croce by Eve Borsook, "Notizie su due Cappelle di Santa Croce a Firenze," *Rivista d'Arte* 36 (1961–62), pp. 89–106.

[2] Compare Rona Goffen, *Spirituality in Conflict: St. Francis and Giotto's Bardi Chapel* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 1988), pp. 69–73 and Jane C. Long, "The Program of Giotto's Saint Francis Cycle at Santa Croce in Florence," *Franciscan Studies*, 52 (1992), pp. 101–105.

One method to deal with such conflicting interpretations is to turn the question of parallelism around. Instead of arguing for a single way that the intentions of artists and patrons are expressed in the correspondences between narratives, we may think about multivalent ways that audiences might read those correspondences. Spectators were not passive vessels to be filled with information by Giotto's fresco cycles, but active participants in interpreting them. They brought to the images different expectations and concerns, and considering the degree to which Giotto's designs encourage those differences to inform meaning allows us to suggest a range of ways the images could be understood. It is not possible to pin down every individual reading of paintings, of course, but if we concentrate on a few works, we can explore diverse categories of viewers and consider how they might interact with visual images to draw different meanings from parallels between scenes.

Two extant chapel decorations by Giotto in the Franciscan church of Santa Croce in Florence offer an instructive case study to examine variations in audience reception of parallelism. As a public space, Santa Croce had heterogeneous viewers in the fourteenth century. Since it was a conventual church, an important element of the audience would comprise the friars themselves. However, it was also one of the most popular burial places in Florence, and lay involvement in both the physical space and the activities that occurred within it was extensive. Santa Croce was constructed with eleven chapels on the east side of the transept; evidence suggests that the chapels were in place before patronage had been arranged.[3] The Franciscans seem to have designed their church with the idea of burials in mind, and some of the wealthiest businessmen in the city purchased the rights to make chapels private family funerary spaces. Hence elite males—the donors—were a second component of the audience to whom the frescoes were addressed.[4] Because the chapels served as family burial

[3] Irene Hueck, "Stifter und Patronatsrecht. Dokumente zu zwei Kapellen der Bardi," *Mitteilungen des kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz*, 20 (1976), pp. 263–70; Dieter Blume, *Wandmalerei als Ordenspropaganda. Bildprogramme im Chorbereich franziskanische Konvente italien bis zur Mitte des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Worms: Werner, 1983); Jane C. Long, "Franciscan Chapel Decoration: The *St. Silvester Cycle* of Maso di Banco at Santa Croce in Florence," *Studies in Iconography* 30 (2009), pp. 72–95.

[4] Donors' identities can be difficult to determine, as the earliest extant *sepoltuario* of the church dates to 1439. Only one chapel—the Velluti/Holy Angels chapel—is known to have had a female donor, who seems to have taken over the patronage upon

spaces, females constituted an important segment of the audience as well; women had a particularly active and often-independent religious life in central and northern Italy in the due- and trecento, and the outfitting of some of the chapels at Santa Croce acknowledges their part by including separate tombs for males and females.[5] Certainly a variety of religious (clerical and lay) and a general lay public must have made up a part of the paintings' spectators, but these groups are too imprecise to evaluate, so we have three audiences' interactions with Giotto's fresco parallels to explore in the church.

Giotto's cycles at Santa Croce are located in the St. Francis (Bardi) Chapel and the Sts. John the Baptist and John the Evangelist (Peruzzi) Chapel, the first two chapels to the south side of the main altar (figs. 11.1, 11.2). Dating is insecure, although they were both likely painted between 1318 and 1328.[6] The chapels are rather tall and narrow, making it difficult for viewers to see the paintings, so the spaces were decorated with a few large narratives rather than many small

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her husband's death. See Andrew Ladis, "The Velluti Chapel in Santa Croce, Florence," *Apollo* 120 (1984), pp. 238–45; Marcia B. Hall *Renovation and Counter-Reformation: Vasari and Duke Cosimo in Sta. Maria Novella and Sta. Croce, 1565–1577* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), pp. 153–66; Ena Giurescu Heller, "Access to Salvation: The Place (and Space) of Women Patrons in Fourteenth-Century Florence," in *Women's Space: Patronage, Place, and Gender in the Medieval Church*, ed. Virginia Chieffo Raguin and Sarah Stanbury (Albany: State University of New York Press), 2005, pp. 169–70.

[5] For an overview of some of the extensive literature on the burgeoning religious life of women in late-medieval Italy, see Luigi Pellegrini, "Female Religious Experience and Society in Thirteenth-Century Italy" in *Monks and Nuns, Saints and Outcasts: Religion in Medieval Society*, ed. Sharon Farmer and Barbara H. Rosenwein (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000), pp. 97–122; Pellegrini argues that Franciscan models particularly allowed women greater religious freedom. At Santa Croce the Holy Confessors Chapel had two *avelli* tombs with donor portraits, one of a male and the other of a female. See Jane C. Long "Salvation through Meditation: The Tomb Frescoes in the Holy Confessors Chapel at Santa Croce in Florence," *Gesta* 34 (1995), pp. 77–88. The Alberti family had separate male and female tombs within the monks' choir which they constructed. See Thomas J. Loughman, "Commissioning Familial Remembrance in Fourteenth-Century Florence" in *The Patron's Payoff: Conspicuous Commissions in Italian Renaissance Art*, ed. Jonathan K. Nelson and Richard J. Zeckhauser (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), p. 140. The St. Francis Chapel had two tomb plaques, one for Ridolfo de' Bardi and the other for the "donne di detto mes. Ridolfo e suoi descendenti," according to Stefano Rosselli, *Sepoltuario fiorentino*, Archivio di Stato di Firenze, MS 624 (1657), fol. 286.

[6] Scholars diverge widely on the dating. See Joachim Poeschke, *Italian Frescoes: the Age of Giotto, 1280–1400* (New York: Abbeville Press, 2005), pp. 224–29.

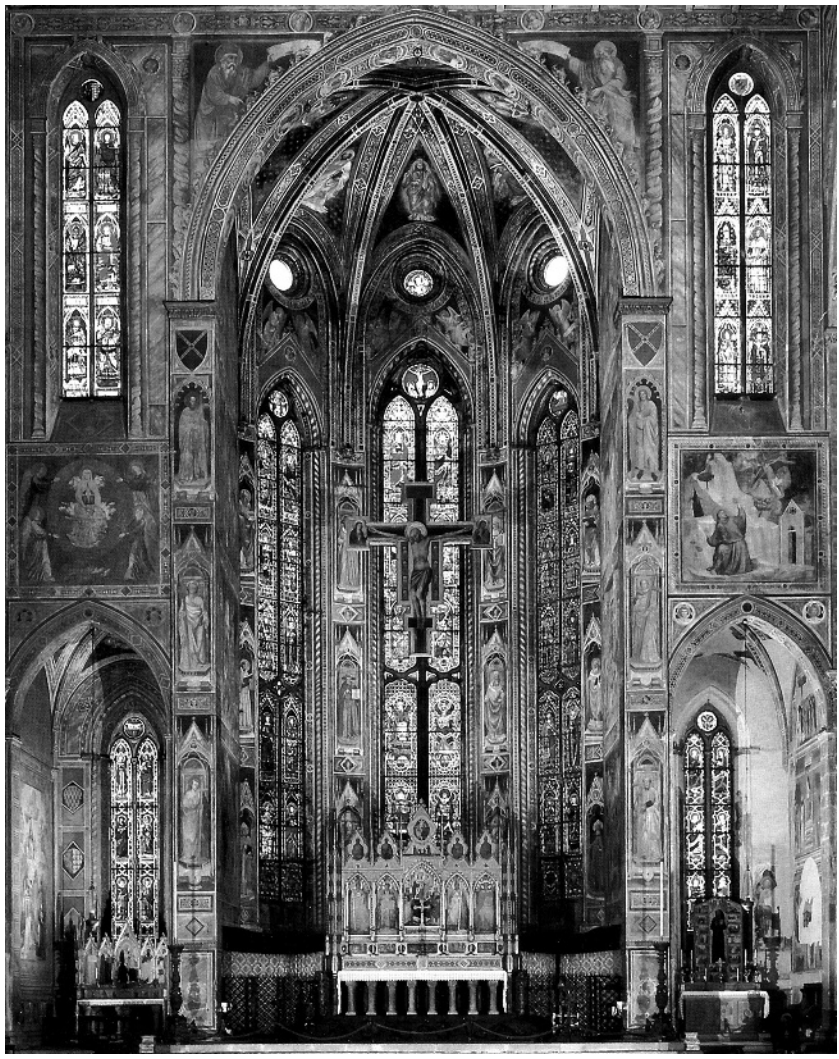

Fig. 11.1 Santa Croce, Florence, Central chapels of the East End. Photo: author.

Fig. 11.2 Santa Croce, Florence, Bardi and Peruzzi Chapels: Giotto, cycles of St. Francis, St. John the Baptist, and St. John the Evangelist, *c.* 1320. Photo: Antonio Quattrone/ Photoservice Electa.

ones.[7] The Bardi Chapel includes seven scenes from the life of the saint, three on each of the side walls and one outside the chapel space, above the entrance arch. The Peruzzi Chapel contains six narratives, three from the life of each saint, deployed on the side walls. Both chapels begin their narratives at the top and work down, although the *Francis Cycle* unfolds the narrative chronologically in a zigzag pattern (upper left to upper right to middle right to middle left to lower left to lower right),[8] while each of the St. John cycles is contained on a single wall, with John the Baptist on the left and John the Evangelist on the right. Both chapels include subsidiary (non-narrative) decorations on vaults, window walls, and intrados: images of Franciscan saints and virtues in the St. Francis Chapel; symbols of the evangelists and representations of prophets and apocalyptic themes in the chapel of the two saints John.

Clear framing of the frescoes emphasizes an arrangement that lends itself to parallelism: as viewers' eyes move across the chapel spaces, they tend to pair images that share well-defined horizontal tiers, while a single glance takes in vertical triads of narratives on each side wall. Even the one solitary image above the entrance to the Bardi Chapel—the *Stigmatization*—is also visually tied to other images, as it can be seen the entire length of the nave in conjunction with the images in the main chapel and a fresco above the first chapel on the north side of the transept. (fig. 11.1) Thus, parallelism and its concomitant, interaction between viewers and images, is a fundamental—even unavoidable—aspect of the viewer's physical experience of Giotto's frescoes at Santa Croce.

The Bardi Chapel is one of the most important spaces in Santa Croce, immediately to the right of the main chapel and dedicated to the founder of the Franciscans. It is not surprising, then, to find that the patron Ridolfo de' Bardi (documented 1298–1360) was one of the richest and most powerful men in Florence, although the dedication to St. Francis and the program of decoration seem to have been determined primarily by the friars, since the donor's family showed no

[7] The footprint of the Bardi Chapel is approximately 4.33m. × 4.66m., while the Peruzzi Chapel is slightly narrower; each fresco measures roughly 2.80m. × 4.5m. The *Stigmatization* is larger: 3.7m. × 3.9m. Giovanni Previtali, *Giotto e la sua bottega* (Milan: Fratelli Fabbri, 1967), p. 326.

[8] Marilyn Aronberg Lavin, *The Place of Narrative: Mural Decoration in Italian Churches, 431–1600* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p. 53, calls this pattern an "aerial boustrophedon."

particular devotion to the saint and Giotto's cycle of his life is closely tied to Franciscan concerns.[9] The narrative starts in the lunettes with *Francis Renounces his Father* and the *Approval of the Franciscan Rule by Innocent III*. (figs. 11.3, 11.4). Both scenes are commonly found in Italian cycles of Francis's life of the due- and trecento, for they tend to regularize the institution of Franciscanism at a time when establishing new religious orders was problematic. The first gives viewers the saint's personal renunciation of a worldly for a religious life (under the sanction of the bishop of Assisi), while the second illustrates papal approbation of the Franciscan Order's mission to preach. The narratives are rather ceremonial: the compositions are balanced and relatively static, and the dominant figures near the center of each crowded scene are Francis and a formally-garbed Church official. Hence, the frescoes underline the saint's submission to the Church and official approval for the establishment of the Franciscan way of life.[10]

In the central scenes of the cycle Giotto depicts the *Trial by Fire* and the *Appearance at Arles*, events that occur less often in earlier Francis cycles than the first two narratives. Indeed, it is more common in the duecento to represent Francis's mission with the *Dream of Innocent III* and the *Sermon to the Birds*, scenes that indicate the saint's special role as renewer of the Church and extraordinary preacher.[11] The Bardi scenes, on the other hand, are less exclusively peculiar to Francis; indeed, they emphasize the preaching, missionary work, and contemplation that were normal for Franciscans in general. The *Trial* shows St. Francis preaching before the Sultan of Egypt and offering to walk through fire to prove the validity of his faith. This event signifies a characteristic element of the Franciscan mission to reach out to others, assigned in the *Approval* just above, although it is perhaps the most extreme example of that mission, for Francis's Islamic audience was most obdurate to his Christianity, yet the saint was willing to

[9] Long, "Program," pp. 85–91.

[10] Long, "Program," pp. 92–99. For different interpretations, see William R. Cook, "Giotto and the Figure of St. Francis" in *The Cambridge Companion to Giotto*, ed. Anne Derbes and Mark Sandona (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 146–47; Goffen, pp. 65–69.

[11] For numerous examples, see William R. Cook, *Images of St. Francis in Painting, Stone and Glass from the Earliest Images to ca. 1320 in Italy* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1993).

Fig. 11.3 Santa Croce, Florence, Bardi Chapel, left wall: Giotto, *Francis Renounces his Father, Appearance at Arles*, *Funeral of St. Francis*. Photo: Antonio Quattrone/ Photoservice Electa.

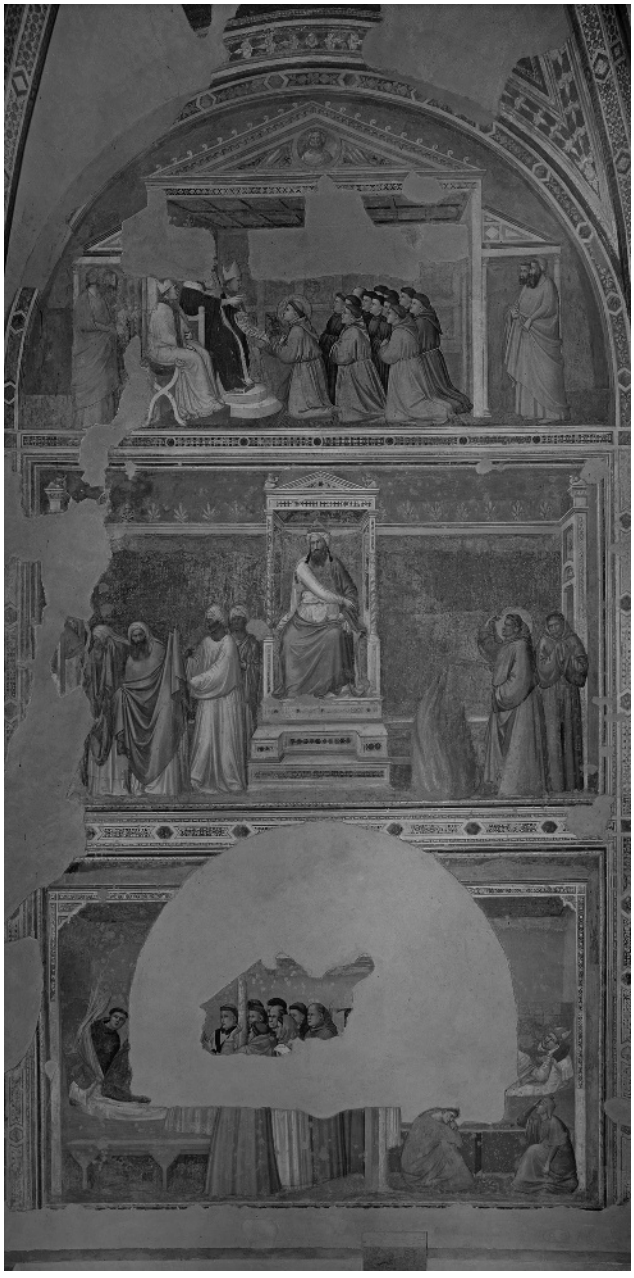

Fig. 11.4 Santa Croce, Florence, Bardi Chapel, right wall: Giotto, *Approval of the Franciscan Rule by Innocent III, Trial by Fire, Visions of St. Francis.* Photo: Antonio Quattrone/ Photoservice Electa.

court martyrdom to bring his message to them.[12] The *Appearance* also provides a typical Franciscan practice in an extreme form; this time, however, the image represents meditation rather than missionary activity. During the course of a sermon given by St. Anthony of Padua at the Franciscan convent at Arles, one friar experienced a vision of St. Francis while all the brothers were certain that "the Spirit was bearing witness to the true presence of the holy father among them."[13] Prayer and contemplation, as a means to achieve closeness with God, were one of the central poles of Christian life, but these activities were not typically rewarded with visions, so the scene shows the audience how successfully the Franciscans could undertake them.[14]

The lowest scenes in the Bardi Chapel deal with Francis's death and ascent to heaven. On the left is his funeral, while on the right is a pair of visions of the saint ascending to heaven experienced by a Franciscan friar and a bishop (at different locations) at the moment of his death. The funeral scene proves Francis's humanity as well as his sanctity; mourners point out his stigmata as they grieve his loss, and angels carry his soul up towards heaven. The *Visions* shows the cult of St. Francis that begins at the time of his death; as witnesses to his ascension, the friar and bishop are the first recipients of his posthumous powers. Clearly we see the rewards for the Franciscan way of life illustrated in this pair of frescoes.[15]

The six frescoes within the Bardi Chapel exhibit a consistent horizontal parallelism that evokes three themes regarding Francis's life: his calling, his mission, and his divine acceptance. The programmatic organization of the frescoes does not end with the horizontal divisions, however, for the vertical arrangement of the scenes onto the two side walls of the chapel also enhances their meaning. On the left, the *Renunciation* appears above the *Appearance at Arles* and the *Funeral*; on the right are the *Approval, Trial*, and *Visions*. The left-hand scenes

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[12] The story is told in Bonaventure's *Legenda maior* in a chapter titled, "Francis's passionate love—his longing for martyrdom," and much of the text is devoted to discussing how Francis's love for Christ crucified inspired him to "imitate the glorious victory of the martyrs in whom the fire of love could not be extinguished or their courage broken." *Legenda maior*, 9/5 (in *Francis of Assisi: Early Documents*, ed. Regis J. Armstrong, O.F.M. *et al.* (New York: New City Press, 2000), 2, p. 576.

[13] *Legenda maior*, 4/10 (Armstrong, 2, p. 557).

[14] Long, "Program," pp. 99–105. For different interpretations, see Cook, "Giotto," p. 150; Goffen, pp. 69–75.

[15] Long, "Program," pp. 105–10. For different interpretations, see Cook, "Giotto," pp. 150–152; Goffen, pp. 76–77.

all deal with the inward aspects of Francis's faith: his personal profession to God, the effects of his kind of meditation, and his entrance into heaven. These are basically contemplative events, dealing with changes within individuals rather than efforts at outreach. For more active Franciscan endeavors, we must turn to the right wall, where the frescoes represent the official sanctioning of the Franciscan mission, Francis's efforts to carry out that mission, and the emergence of his cult.[16]

The *Stigmatization* is both an introduction to and an emblem of the cycle of frescoes within the Bardi Chapel, physically and iconographically. (fig. 11.1) Since it is the outstanding event of Francis's life—the stigmata are his chief attribute in art—it is far and away the most commonly represented episode from his *vita*, and it is always immediately identifiable as peculiarly Franciscan. At Santa Croce it is linked with Giotto's paintings within the chapel, where it stands for both the active and contemplative lives, because Francis received the stigmata during a prolonged period of meditation: his active "martyrdom" was the result of his contemplative devotions. This concept was current in Franciscan iconography, for Matthew Paris's thirteenth-century *Chronica maiora* included an illustration of the Stigmatization in which the left arm of the seraph was labeled action and the right was contemplation; the Bardi frescoes follow Matthew Paris's illustration in placing the active scenes on the heraldic left and the contemplative on the heraldic right.[17] The *Stigmatization* also parallels Cimabue's wooden crucifix that was in the main altar chapel to the left of the

[16] Long, "Program," pp. 110–13. For different interpretations, see Cook, "Giotto," p. 152; Goffen, pp. 63, 77.

[17] Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 16, f. 70v. See Rosalind B. Brooke, *The Image of St Francis: Responses to Sainthood in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2006), p. 201. On the tension between the active and contemplative lives in St. Francis, see Kenneth Baxter Wolf, *The Poverty of Riches: St. Francis of Assisi Reconsidered* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 63–68. It is possible that this division into right and left was hierarchical, implying the superiority of contemplation. See Corine Schleif, "Men on the Right–Women on the Left: (A)symmetrical Spaces and Gendered Places" in *Women's Space: Patronage, Place, and Gender in the Medieval Church*, ed. Virginia Chieffo Raguin and Sarah Stanbury (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2005), pp. 207–49. Cf. Adrian Randolph, "Regarding Women in Sacred Space," in *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews Grieco (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 17–41, who denies a consistent left (female)—right (male) arrangement; instead, he argues for a north (negative, for women)—south (positive, for men) division of sacred spaces.

Bardi Chapel and the *Ascension of the Virgin* by the Master of Figline beyond that. (fig. 11.1) This triad underlined the main elements of Franciscan piety: the founder of the order and his special devotions to the mother of Jesus and Christ's Passion.[18]

The Peruzzi Chapel abuts the Bardi Chapel on the right, and the patron family was one of the few that could challenge Bardi economic and political influence in Florence. Evidence suggests that the donor of the frescoes may have been Giovanni di Rinieri Peruzzi; although the Franciscans seem to have controlled the dedications and decorations of their chapels, surely Giovanni would have had a personal interest in the dedication to the two Sts. John, as one of them was his name saint.[19] Parallelism is perhaps even more strongly marked in this chapel than in the Bardi frescoes, since the lives of the two Sts. John are arranged opposite each other. As most viewers approach the chapel obliquely from the nave, they behold the right wall with three scenes from the life of John the Evangelist: *John's Vision on Patmos, The Raising of Drusiana*, and *The Ascension of St. John*. (fig. 11.5) Giotto severely edited the saint's life to condense it into only three events, and as a result his frescoes represent an unusual iconographical choice.[20] St. John the Evangelist cycles—which are not, in any case, common in this period—do not normally start with the *Vision*, nor is the *Ascension* often depicted, and there are no surviving Italian precedents for representing either episode as Giotto has done.[21] The focus of the *Vision* is the centralized figure of the saint, rapt in the vision of symbolic creatures that unfolds around him. At the center of the scene in the middle fresco is the figure of Drusiana, miraculously springing

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[18] Long, "Program," pp. 113–17. For different interpretations see Cook, "Giotto," pp. 153–155; Goffen, pp. 60–63.

[19] Leonetto Tintori and Eve Borsook, *Giotto: The Peruzzi Chapel* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1965), pp. 7–14. But cf. Ferdinando Bologna, *Novità su Giotto: Giotto al tempo della cappella Peruzzi* (Turin: Einaudi, 1969), pp. 56–57, who notes that the absence of trecento documentation identifying Giovanni as the patron suggests that the chapel belonged to the entire Peruzzi family.

[20] Jens T. Wollesen, *Pictures and Reality: Monumental Frescoes and Mosaics in Rome around 1300* (New York: Peter Lang, 1998), pp. 28–31, 183–84, discusses the tendency for saints' *vitae* in Franciscan fresco decorations to be edited to address specific Minorite concerns.

[21] Laurie Schneider, "The Iconography of the Peruzzi Chapel," *L'Arte*, 18 (1972), p. 91; Julie F. Codell, "Giotto's Peruzzi Chapel Frescoes: Wealth, Patronage and the Earthly City," *Renaissance Quarterly* 41 (1988), pp. 592–93; Jeffery F. Hamburger, *St. John the Divine: The Deified Evangelist in Medieval Art and Theology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p. 157.

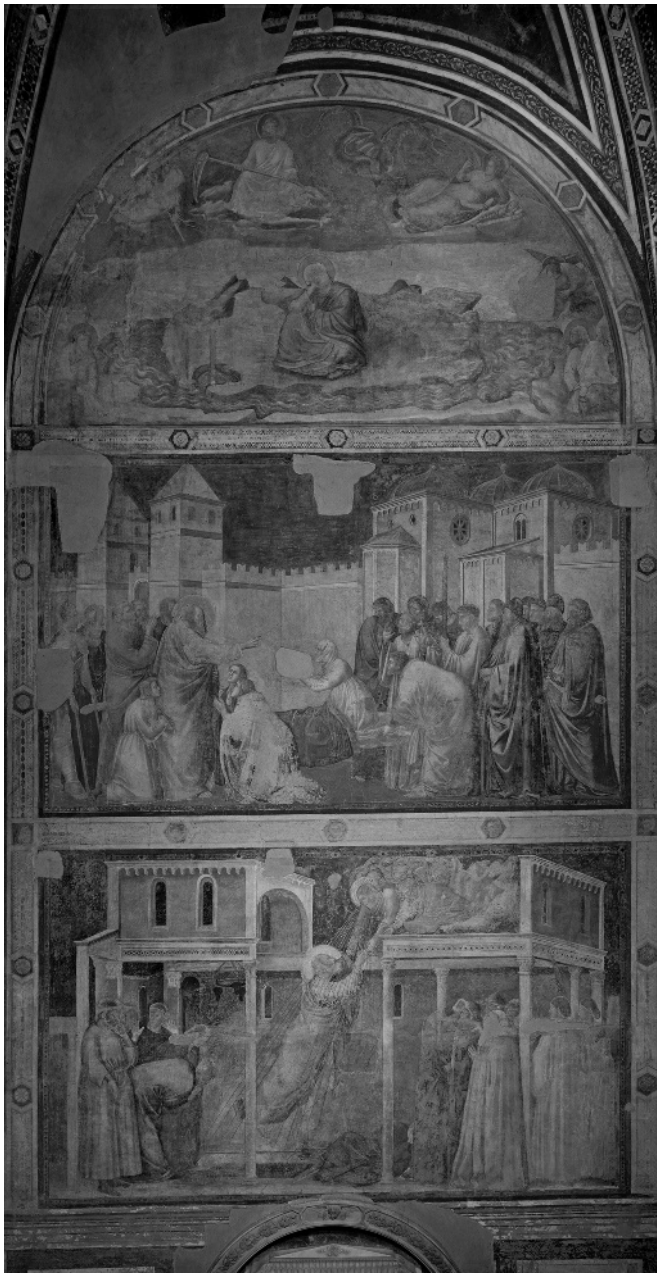

Fig. 11.5 Santa Croce, Florence, Peruzzi Chapel, right wall: Giotto, *John's Vision on Patmos, The Raising of Drusiana, The Ascension of St. John the Evangelist*. Photo: Antonio Quattrone/Photoservice Electa.

to life at John's command, while the saint again dominates the lowest fresco, as his ponderous body rises towards Christ's heavenly embrace. The narratives focus on John's extraordinary and miraculous powers; entirely missing are the more ordinary episodes of his *vita*, such as his role in Jesus's life or his later preaching and clashes with Roman authorities. The cycle concentrates not on the saint's biography, but on the gifts he received through the grace of God: revelations, power to restore life in the name of Christ, and ascent to heaven, both body and soul.

Visible as the observer faces the main altar from the transept, the *Baptist Cycle* is an equally incomplete biography. (fig. 11.6) Although John's life was frequently represented in Italian art (especially in Florence, since he was the patron saint of the city), this is again a remarkably abbreviated cycle, and Giotto's frescoes are striking for the absence of the saint as an effective actor; there is, in effect, no protagonist here.[22] The lunette depicts the annunciation of John's birth to his father, the central scene shows his birth and naming, and the final fresco represents his decapitated head presented at the feast of Herod. Unlike the Evangelist frescoes opposite, these paintings tend to lack a central focus; the compositions are more dispersed, and the impression of God-given powers is entirely lacking. Instead of the voice in the wilderness, the messenger of the Messiah (Mt. 11:11), Giotto's *Baptist Cycle* depicts a main character who is acted upon. The episodes chosen represent incidents from John's life that broadly parallel the life of Christ,[23] with an emphasis on events that reveal the Incarnation—conception, birth, and death (or annunciation, nativity, and crucifixion)—but there is no assurance of salvation for this pre-resurrection saint in Giotto's frescoes. For that, the viewer must turn to the altarpiece in the chapel, which bridged the space between the two cycles. If scholars are correct, and the Kress polyptych in the North Carolina Museum of Art from Giotto's workshop is the Peruzzi altarpiece,[24] (fig. 11.7) then the image of John the Baptist flanking the blessing Christ with the Virgin, John the Evangelist, and Francis would show observers the saint's ultimate reward.

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[22] Schneider, p. 94; Codell, p. 596.

[23] Codell, pp. 593–95. On links between the Baptist and the Incarnation, see Hamburger, pp. 66, 70.

[24] Wilhelm Suida, "A Giotto Altarpiece," *The Burlington Magazine* 59 (1931), pp. 188–93; Tintori and Borsook, p. 23; Bologna, pp. 23–85.

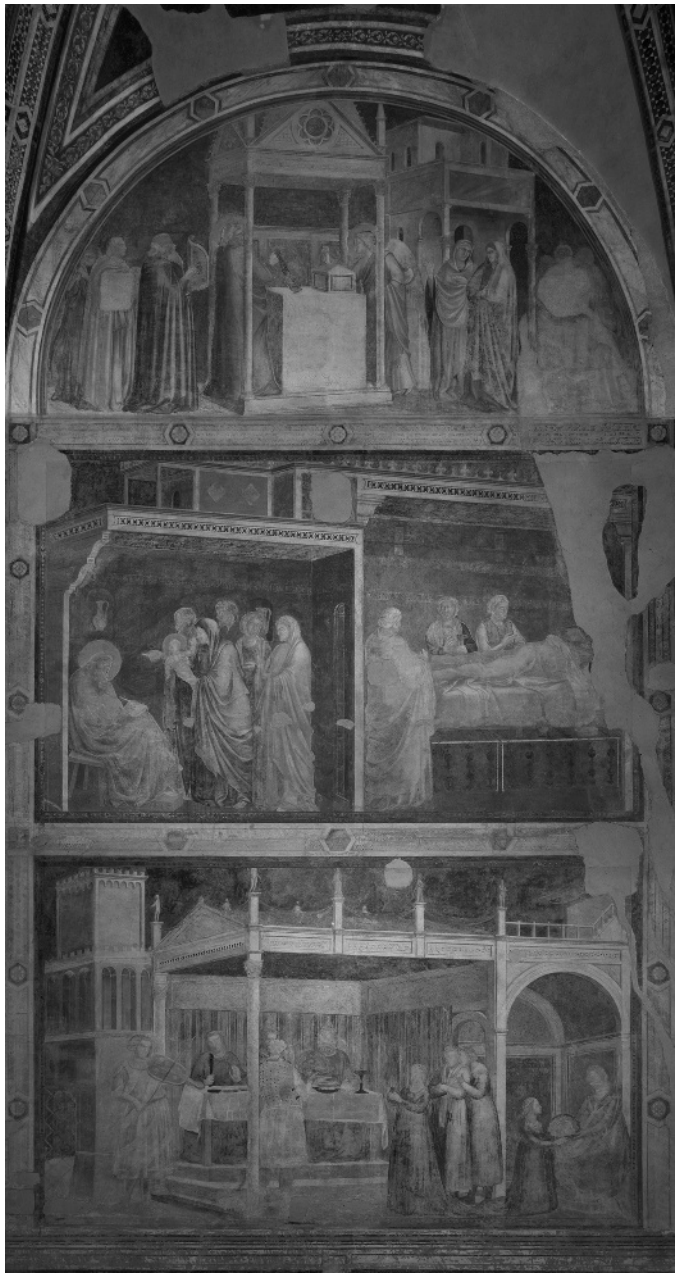

Fig. 11.6 Santa Croce, Florence, Peruzzi Chapel, left wall: Giotto, *Annunciation of John's Birth, Birth and Naming of John the Baptist, Feast of Herod*. Photo: Antonio Quattrone/ Photoservice Electa.

Fig. 11.7 Giotto Workshop, *"Peruzzi Altarpiece."* Photo: North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, Gift of the Samuel H. Kress Foundation.

The back wall of the Peruzzi Chapel is badly damaged; all that can be identified of the frescoes that originally surrounded the window is the figure of a lamb on an altar.[25] The lamb signifies Christ, of course, but it is also a motif that closely ties the two saints together, for it is the Lamb of God of the Baptist's prophecy and the Evangelist's apocalyptic vision. Like the altarpiece, then, it bridges the space (and time) between the two saints and reminds us to consider them not as discrete individuals, but as participants in God's scheme of salvation.

The different approaches to representing the saints' *vitae* in the two John cycles in the Peruzzi Chapel suggest that they must be read together for full understanding. The two saints framed the life of Jesus, and in Giotto's frescoes they appear to represent the duality of his nature: human and divine. The Baptist is born and dies, like the human Jesus, while the Evangelist exhibits the powers belonging to the divine Christ.[26] This reference to Christ may reflect the Lateran in

[25] Tintori and Borsook, pp. 16, 23; Bologna, pp. 51–57 (illustrated in fig. 58), disputes Borsook's argument that the lamb is an apocalyptic symbol, reading it instead as "una figura della redenzione."

[26] Bonaventure writes of the Evangelist that "there was no one before him nor did anyone follow after him, who reached so great knowledge of divinity."*Commentary on the Gospel of John*, Prooemium, 3, trans. and ed., Robert J. Karris, O.F.M. (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2007), p. 36. Hamburger expatiates on the Christ-like qualities of the Evangelist, but writes that Giotto's representation of the *Ascension* (the only Peruzzi image he discusses) is "without…any explicit comparison to Christ," p. 157. His comment is based on an analysis of the

Rome, which was dedicated to the two saints John in the later Middle Ages, along with its original dedication to the Savior, although this triad was not unusual; the Franciscans' close relationship to the papacy and Francis's special role in revitalizing the Church might thus be suggested through this pairing of the Baptist and the Evangelist.[27] Beyond these overall parallels, however, Giotto also establishes horizontal correspondences between individual frescoes that link events together. Each scene in the lunettes represents a message from God, but the quality of those messages varies sharply. The Baptist's father, Zacharias, is visited by Gabriel, but questions the meaning of the angel's simple announcement and is punished with dumbness; the Evangelist is graced with prophetic revelations because he embraces God's message. Miracles occur in the middle frescoes, but the Baptist episode is a pale reflection of the scene from the Evangelist's life. Zacharias regaining his speech as he names his newborn son is hardly the same kind of astounding event as Drusiana regaining her life. Intensity is not lacking in either of the lowest tier frescoes, yet the tone of the frescoes differs significantly: the Baptist's horrific execution is juxtaposed against the Evangelist's triumphant ascension. Thus the parallels across the chapel are more in the way of contrasts than similarities, underlining the uncertainty of the human in comparison to the divine.[28]

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painting as an independent image; the parallels outlined here suggest otherwise. See Schneider, pp. 92–94, for a different reading of the relation of the saints to Christ.

[27] The Lateran Baptistery had three chapels, one dedicated to each of the Sts. John and the third to the Cross. Hamburger, pp. 65–82, gives several other examples of the triad, all from northern Europe. Pope Nicholas IV (1287–92) had already tied the Franciscans to the Lateran in his restoration of that basilica's east end; Torriti's mosaic in the apse (signed 1291; reworked in 1878) represented Sts. Francis and Anthony of Padua, along with the pope as donor, the Virgin, Peter, Paul, John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, and Andrew adoring the jeweled cross in Paradise below a bust of Christ surrrounded by angels in heaven. Alessandro Tomei, *Iacobus Torriti pictor: una vicenda figurativa del tardo Duecento romano* (Rome: Argos Edizioni, 1990), pp. 77–99.

[28] The saints' *vitae* could also refer to the active and contemplative lives. The Baptist's preaching and martyrdom made him an exemplar of the former, while St. Augustine read the Evangelist's life as an archetype of the latter; Hamburger, pp. 152–53. Bonaventure wrote that "some scriptures focus on humanity and the active life while Blessed John focuses on Divinity and the contemplative life," citing Augustine as his source. *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, Prooemium, Questions, 3, trans. and ed., Robert J. Karris, O.F.M. (St. Bonaventure, NY: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2007), p. 45. Mendicant writings frequently presented the two saints as exemplars of the *vita mixta*, the integration of the active and contemplative vocations. Annette Volfing, *John the Evangelist and Medieval German Writing: Imitating the Inimitable*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 126–30.

This analysis has suggested a variety of ways parallels among Giotto's frescoes in the Bardi and Peruzzi Chapels offered messages about Sts. Francis, John the Evangelist, and John the Baptist, but it has not addressed the way those messages might have been received. Given Santa Croce's disparate audiences, allusions to Francis's vocation or to the nature of divine communication could have had widely varying significance. Friars, trained in religious thought and seeing saints as the direct models of their way of life, would have interpreted parallels in the chapels' fresco cycles as references to their own religious calling; at the same time, merchant businessmen and their wives might have read those parallels as reflecting their own worldly concerns or illustrating virtues necessary for their salvation. The fresco cycles had no fixed implications, then; it would have been the audiences' interactions with the images that created meaning from the chapels' decorations.

The Franciscans were unusual among religious orders of the trecento in their reliance on the personality of a singular individual to define their vocation. Francis's *vita* and understanding of scripture were the foundation of all that defined the order—its mendicancy, the form of *imitatio Christi* it followed, its devotion to the Passion.[29] Hence, cycles of the founder's life formed the core of any Franciscan church decoration. Francis's stigmata proved that he was following the right path, and his brothers could do no better than to imitate him to achieve closeness with God.[30]

The division of the Bardi Chapel into active and contemplative walls represents an approach to religious life that was common in the middle ages, but was also of particular importance to the Franciscans. From the outset the Minors were torn between a traditional, monastic, contemplative life and a new, more involved, public calling.[31] Francis personally was divided between the two ways of life. His biographers described the saint's "zeal in prayer" at great length, and most of the

[29] It is impossible to review the vast literature on the Franciscans here. For an excellent recent analysis of the early Franciscans, see Brooke, passim.

[30] St. Bonaventure writes: "If we consider the height of his extraordinary sanctity we can come to the conclusion, without any doubt, that this messenger of God—worthy of love by Christ, imitation by us, and admiration by the world—was God's servant, Francis. In this, while living among humans, he was an imitator of angelic purity and was placed as an example for the perfect followers of Christ." *Legenda Maior*, prologue 2 (Armstrong, 2, p. 527).

[31] This material derives from ideas I have already published: Long, "Program," pp. 111–12.

seminal events of his spiritual life occurred during periods of meditation. Francis was converted to a religious calling during a moment of prayer before a painted cross in a church outside of Assisi, and near the end of his life a seraph appeared as he meditated on Christ's Passion, demonstrating God's favor by stigmatizing the saint. On the other hand, his gift of preaching and ability to help others to salvation could not be ignored. Indeed, in approving the Rule in 1209, Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) gave the friars a mission to preach repentance. Bonaventure described Francis later asking his brothers which one would be more acceptable to Christ, noting that prayer brought one closer to God, but that preaching more closely followed the model of Christ. Thus their founder bequeathed the Minors with a double duty; they were to go out on their mission to save others, but were to spend time in prayer and meditation to achieve union with God as well. So the active and contemplative lives laid out vertically in Giotto's *St. Francis Cycle* served to remind the friars of the central tenets of their order, just as the horizontal organization of Francis's life into calling, mission, and reward offered a model for their own religious vocations.

If the friars defined themselves according to the exemplar of St. Francis, they were also open to emulating other saints, among whom the Baptist was one of the most popular. Francis's birth name was Giovanni, and Franciscans frequently compared their founder to John; so important was the analogy, in fact, that Innocent IV (1243–54) consecrated the altar of the lower church at Assisi to John the Baptist in 1253 and provided the basilica with a relic of the saint.[32] Interestingly, however, it was the poverty and preaching of the Baptist that was most often cited as an archetype for Francis's mission;[33] since those aspects of his life were lacking in Giotto's cycle, this traditional model was not evoked. Instead, the frescoes laid out the saint's life to reflect the Incarnation, the central theme of Franciscan piety. St. Francis himself set the model for Franciscan spirituality in his devotion to the life of Christ, and the friars consistently emphasized the contemplation of Jesus's human experiences as a way of comprehending the Gospel

[32] Brooke, pp. 66, 255; Schneider, pp. 91–92.

[33] Bonaventure, writes: "Like John the Baptist, he was destined by God to prepare in the desert a way of the highest poverty and to preach repentance by word and example." *Legenda Maior*, prologue, 1 (Armstrong, 2, p. 526).

most fully (emotionally as well as intellectually).[34] Hence, rather than illustrating the character of a saint for the friars to imitate, the Baptist cycle provided them with a theme for meditation.

John the Evangelist was also commonly tied to Francis, though more as witness than as model: "And so in the true prophecy of…John the Apostle and Evangelist, [Francis] is considered not without reason to be like the angel ascending from the rising of the sun bearing the seal of the living God."[35] This association could explain Giotto starting the Evangelist cycle with the *Vision on Patmos*; subsidiary areas of the decoration in the Peruzzi Chapel include apocalyptic imagery that would remind the Minors of the nature of their founder.[36] Again, however, the cycle as a whole does not concentrate on allusions to Francis; while he experienced visions and performed healing miracles, these events are too common among saints in general to be read as an explicit reference to Francis. Instead, like the *Baptist Cycle*, the Evangelist episodes provide a contemplative motif: God's grace at work.[37]

To say that the Peruzzi Chapel frescoes do not exemplify Francis is not to say that they are not Franciscan. Indeed, the themes are profoundly Franciscan. St. Bonaventure's *Itinerarium mentis in deum* (The Mind's Journey into God) is a guide to meditation for the use of the friars. Bonaventure lays out what he calls a "threefold progression" or three stages of perception the mind must experience to ascend to God.[38] The first stage involves observation of the natural world through the physical senses; all creation reflects God, especially the Incarnation, which serves as a "ladder restoring the first ladder that had been broken in Adam."[39] The *Baptist Cycle*, with its focus on parallels between John's life and Christ's Incarnation, leads friars through this first phase. The second stage requires contemplation of one's faith and belief in God; it is the gifts of grace that give access

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[34] Long, "Salvation," pp. 84, 87 (n. 25).

[35] Bonaventure, *Legenda Maior*, prologue 1 (Armstrong, 2, p. 527).

[36] Tintori and Borsook, pp. 23–25; Codell, pp. 605–607.

[37] For Bonaventure's discussion of John as a special recipient of God's grace, see the Prooemium to his *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, (Karris, pp. 33–55). On the use of John as a devotional guide for German readers in the Middle Ages, see Volfing, pp. 101–60.

[38] Bonaventure, *Itinerarium mentis in deum*, 1, trans. and ed. Philotheus Boehner, O.F.M. (St. Bonaventure, NY: The Franciscan Institute, 1990), pp. 39–49. Each stage has two steps, for a total of six steps to God.

[39] *Itinerarium*, 4/2 (Boehner, p. 73)

to the heavenly Jerusalem.[40] The emphasis on grace in the *Evangelist Cycle*, particularly starting with John's apocalyptic vision, invites the Franciscans to move into the second phase of contemplation. In the final stage the believer transcends the familiar to consider the pure power and goodness of God; having progressed through the first two stages, the soul now focuses on "Being Itself."[41] Not surprisingly, the Peruzzi Chapel does not illustrate this phase, for at this point of contemplation the believer has moved beyond sensory experience: "Being does not come to us by means of something else."[42] Bonaventure cites Francis's vision of the seraph that stigmatized him as an example of a successful journey into God. Giotto painted this scene above the Bardi Chapel, immediately to the left of the Peruzzi Chapel. (fig. 11.2) The friars might use the two St. John cycles to lift their minds through the first two stages towards God, then raise their eyes beyond to dwell on the model of their founder's "perfect contemplation."[43]

The Franciscans could interact with Giotto's frescoes at Santa Croce in different ways. Inasmuch as the scenes represented saints important to the order, friars might read them as archetypes of the religious life on which to model their own. Since the saints appeared under divine approval, they advertised the holiness of the models the Franciscans had chosen. Further, however, the brothers might use the cycles as vehicles in the contemplation that brought them closer to God. The power of works of art to inspire meditation was central to Franciscan practice and experience. Francis himself had been called to the spiritual life by a vision that resulted from meditation before a crucifix in the church of San Damiano at Assisi, and the Minors were consistently encouraged to use images as devices to inspire their spiritual activities; Franciscan contemplative manuals stressed the power of representations to engender an emotion response, through which the faithful might achieve an elevated meditative state.[44] Thus the significance that

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[40] *Itinerarium* 4/4 (Boehner, p. 75): "For into this heavenly Jerusalem no one enters unless it first comes down into his heart by grace, as St. John beheld in the Apocalypse."

[41] *Itinerarium*, 5/3 (Boehner, p. 81).

[42] *Itinerarium*, 5/3 (Boehner, p. 83).

[43] *Itinerarium*, 7/3 (Boehner, p. 99). That Bonaventure allowed works of art to serve as tools for contemplation is made evident in his sermon for the twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost, which draws analogies between the creation of works of art and God's work at the Creation (Bonaventure, *Opera theologica selecta*, ed. P. Augustini Sépinski, (Florence: Quaracchi, 1964), pp. 368–74; as cited by Hamburger, p. 189.

[44] Long, "Salvation," pp. 84–85.

Franciscans took away from the frescoes would depend upon the individual friar viewing the paintings or the particular moment in which he studied them. At some times the images could be didactic, illustrating exempla of the religious life; at other times they might be devotional, helping the brothers in their search for union with God.

Model religious behavior and complex contemplative motifs are unlikely to have defined lay patrons' interactions with the Bardi and Peruzzi chapel decorations. This is not to say that the laity was uninterested in spiritual themes, but that the formal Franciscan training to interpret parallels in the ways friars might was probably lacking. So what engaged the donors? There has been a tendency among many historians to see private chapels in Italian churches as "monuments to their [secular] builders."[45] The representation of coats-of-arms in the subsidiary areas of their decoration (including cloth banners, now lost) and the inheritability of chapels are seen as signs of proud possession, symbols of the donors' wealth and civic glory. But the Santa Croce chapels could scarcely have stood to other citizens of Florence as proof of the patrons' personal eminence, for the laity had only limited access to them. The high *tramezzo* that spanned the third bay of the nave blocked any view of the east chapels, and although doors opened between the two areas of the church, it is hard to determine how often lay people were allowed behind the screen; there could be little reason to construct this substantial barrier were it not intended, to some degree at least, to obstruct access to the east end.[46] Entry to the chapels themselves was

[45] Richard A. Goldthwaite, *The Building of Renaissance Florence: an Economic and Social History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982), pp. 99–101; John Larner, *Culture and Society in Italy 1290–1420* (New York: Scribner, 1971), pp. 60–61; Peter Burke, *Culture and Society in central Italy, 1420–1540* (New York: Scribner, 1972), pp. 236–37; Richard Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (New York: Academic Press, 1980), pp. 92–98; Ena Giurescu, "Trecento Family Chapels in Santa Maria Novella and Santa Croce: Architecture, Patronage and Competition" (Ph.D. diss., Institute of Fine Arts, New York, 1997), pp. 280–84. See also Codell's interpretation of the Peruzzi frescoes or Goffen's reading of the Bardi frescoes.

[46] Marcia B. Hall, "The Italian Rood Screen: Some Implications for Liturgy and Function" in *Essays Presented to Myron P. Gilmore*, ed. Sergio Bertelli and Gloria Ramakus (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1978), 2, pp. 213–18; idem, "The *Tramezzo*, in Santa Croce, Florence, Reconstructed," *Art Bulletin* 56 (1974), p. 333, notes that only men may have been allowed behind the *tramezzo*. She reconstructs the *tramezzo* at S. Croce spanning the entire width of the church (nave and aisles) at an approximate height of 17m, so it certainly hindered visibility of the east end. Hall has returned to some of these issues more recently, "The *Tramezzo* in the Italian Renaissance, Revisited" in *Thresholds of the Sacred: Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screens, East and West*, ed. Sharon E.J. Gerstel, (Washington,

further restricted, for all were closed off by metal gates, and they were in any case generally too small to contain many onlookers. While we have no documents specifying who entered the chapels or how often, it is reasonable to suppose that family members, male and female, would have been admitted during services for their dead.[47] The proliferation of personal symbols visible in the decorations would therefore have been intended to serve as reminders of the deceased, for whom services in the chapels were celebrated, rather than to impress viewers with the living patron family.

Scholars have consistently noted the high percentage of death scenes in the Bardi and Peruzzi frescoes; all four of the lowest narratives in the chapels (those easiest to see) deal with death, and three of the four represent ascent to heaven.[48] The interest such scenes might bear for patrons who were to be buried in these chapels is obvious. Not only were the saints' ascensions models to which the patrons would aspire after death, but they assured the living of the saints' closeness to God and thus of their intercessory abilities.[49] This reading is particularly explicit

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D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2006), pp. 214–32. In San Francesco in Bologna, men were permitted behind the *tramezzo* on the south and women behind it on the north ; Alfonso Rubbiani, *La Chiesa di San Francesco in Bologna* (Bologna: Nicola Zanichelli, 1866), p. 57. Such a division could also have been followed at Santa Croce. Giurescu believes the laity had more access to the chapels than Hall suggests, but she agrees that women's access was strictly limited, p. 209. On broader implications for *tramezzi*, see Jacqueline E. Jung, "Beyond the Barrier: The Unifying Role of the Choir Screen in Gothic Churches," *Art Bulletin* 82 (2000), pp. 622–57 and idem, "Seeing Through Screens: The Gothic Choir Enclosure as Frame" in *Thresholds of the Sacred: Architectural, Art Historical, Liturgical and Theological Perspectives on Religious Screens, East and West*, ed. Sharon E.J. Gerstel (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2006), pp. 185–213. I am grateful to the publisher's reader of my manuscript for references to Jung's work.

[47] See also Hall, "*Tramezzo* in the Italian Renaissance, Revisited," p. 219, who argues that male and female family members were admitted to their chapels when the friars were not using the monks' choir, but that the area outside *tramezzi* was generally considered women's space in Italian churches. Randolph (as in n. 17), pp. 30–34, and Donal Cooper, "Franciscan Choir Enclosures and the Function of Double-Sided Altarpieces in Pre-Tridentine Umbria," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 64 (2001), pp. 1–54, see separation of the sexes as one of the purposes of the *tramezzo*.

[48] All sources address this idea, but see especially Schneider, who reads the central theme of the Peruzzi frescoes as resurrection. Hamburger, p. 277, n. 175, notes that "the rarity of the iconography [of John's *Ascension*] seems never to have been given sufficient attention." Of course, the function of the chapel as a burial space and the need to find a parallel with the Baptist's martyrdom explain the inclusion of this uncommon subject.

[49] John the Baptist's role as intercessor was traditionally established by his customary place at Jesus's left hand in the Last Judgment. On the intercessory powers of John the Evangelist, as believed in Italy, see Anne Derbes and Mark Sandona, *The Usurer's*

in the Peruzzi Chapel, where the Evangelist successfully asks Jesus to raise Drusiana from the dead, and the altarpiece, which is essentially a deesis, shows all three saints (plus the Virgin) addressing the Savior. Unlike the Franciscans, then, the patrons interacted with the cycles not to confirm the validity of their present life but to reassure themselves of the promise for a future life.

Resurrection iconography was directly accessible to a secular audience, but other elements of parallelism in Giotto's frescoes would have been meaningful to patrons as well. The lay world comes into the *Francis Cycle* in two scenes: *Francis Renounces his Father* and *The Funeral*. Both are on the left wall of the Bardi chapel, separated by *The Appearance at Arles*. In the first scene merchants surround Francis's angry father, watching intently as the saint rejects their way of life for a higher calling. They enter *The Funeral* to form part of the crowd of mourners around Francis's corpse. The three narratives of this wall together suggest a transformation, from rejection to acceptance, instigated by the miraculous nature of Francis as represented in the central episode. Ridolfo de' Bardi could well have looked at this wall and seen himself: beginning as a merchant focused on worldly things, he becomes part of an inner circle close to the holy, through the mediation of Francis and his friars.[50] Hence, this wall represents a narrative of salvation that might actually reflect the patron's life.

The salvation offered does not explicitly include women. The only female character in the entire cycle is in the first fresco, *Francis Renounces his Father*, where a woman restrains a child from throwing stones at Francis. She does not thereby receive closeness to the holy, but she may represent the most common religious role women could undertake in this period: working to save others. Prayer was the outstanding characteristic of female piety in the medieval period, since women were banned from most forms of active religious engagement;[51] the contemplative life

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Heart: Giotto, Enrico Scrovegni, and the Arena Chapel in Padua (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008), p. 78.

[50] I do not imply that there is a portrait of Ridolfo here; rather I would say he (and any other male family member) could see his "type" represented.

[51] Jo Ann McNamara, "The Need to Give: Suffering and Female Sanctity in the Middle Ages" in *Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe,* ed. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Timea Szell (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 212–13; Barbara Newman, *From Virile Woman to WomanChrist: Studies in Medieval Religion and Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 109–20; P.H. Cullum, "Gendering charity in medieval hagiography" in *Gender and Holiness: Men,*

that is illustrated on the left wall of the Bardi Chapel was their "natural" sphere. Moreover, women's prayer was most often directed towards intercession, particularly for their family members, lifting their religious endeavors from purely personal meditation towards active connection with the salvation of others (different in details but not in substance from the events on the right wall of the Bardi Chapel). Bardi women thus could interact with the frescoes to define their own contemplation, prayer, and service to others as a path towards God. Since the very purpose of the chapel was to facilitate the redemption of the donors' souls, a real coincidence existed between the typical piety of the women of the Bardi family, attending services for their dead, and the images painted on the walls of their family chapel.[52]

The themes of Incarnation and grace that were part of the Franciscan reading of the Peruzzi frescoes would not have been irrelevant to lay spectators, but it is unlikely that the secular patrons had access to Bonaventure's *Itinerarium*, since it was written in Latin and intended for the friars' use. It seems telling for an ordinary viewer that the *Baptist Cycle* ends with an execution, while the *Evangelist Cycle* concludes with an ascension. At the simplest level, these parallel scenes would have reminded the patrons that the human condition ends in painful death, and the only escape is through Christ, whose body would have lain on the altar table between the two frescoes, not only in the painted altarpiece but also in the Eucharist.

With the exception of the *Visions*, all the narratives occur in everyday environments, and lay folk dominate the images. Representing scenes from the Baptist's *vita* that implicate the Incarnation domesticates the saint's life, and eliminating his biographical authority—his role as a preacher, prophet, and baptizer—makes him a model for secular Christians. Giotto's cycle provides convincing real-life details that must have been familiar to the Peruzzi: the figures playing musical instruments in the *Annunciation* and *Feast*; the women attending Elizabeth and introducing Zacharias to his son in the *Birth and Naming*; the

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Women and Saints in Late Medieval Europe, ed. Samantha J.E. Riches & Sarah Salih (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 135–51.

[52] Some scholars have underlined the feminine nature of Francis's own sanctity, as expressed in his efforts to "obliterate conventional hierarchies," Cullum, p. 145 and Phyllis Mack, "Feminine Behavior and Radical Action: Franciscans, Quakers, and the Followers of Gandhi," *Signs* 11 (1986), pp. 461–62, but I do not see that Giotto's cycle emphasizes these qualities; instead, Francis strikes me as quite an authoritative, conventionally male figure in these frescoes.

costumes and furnishings in all three frescoes. Family members could see themselves in the ordinary households of John's birth and death. While no common layperson expected to achieve the extraordinary events in the Evangelist's, life, the central actions in each scene—receiving visions, rising from the dead, and ascending into Christ's arms—are not outside the realm of what average, devout Christians sought through their religious devotions, and both the *Raising* and the *Ascension* place the miraculous within the context of a recognizable trecento city.[53] Looking at the two walls in the chapel, then, the patrons would find intersections between their world and the divine realm, and their interactions with the images could persuade them that the grace of God was a gift within reach of their mundane existence.

The Peruzzi frescoes include a significant number of women who, unusually for this period, are important actors in several scenes. They run the gamut from the deepest sinners—Herodias and Salome—to the most highly rewarded believers—Elizabeth and Drusiana—although they can also figure as onlookers to sacred events. These are not exceptional women, for even St. Elizabeth lived an everyday life as wife and faithful believer until she was blessed by God (Luke 1: 5–25). The placement of her parturition opposite Drusiana's revival suggests analogies between physical birth on earth and spiritual rebirth in God,[54] a parallel that sanctifies the most important social function for women in trecento Florence. Beyond this link, the pairing of the two scenes defines aspects of female virture, for Elizabeth's pregnancy represents deliverance from "the shame of barrenness," while Drusiana's revival is a reward for her dedication to the Evangelist and the "divine word."[55] Salome and Herodias's duplicity heightens the sacredness of the other scenes by contrast; in light of the typical religious role of women as agents for others, the fact that Salome and Herodias's sins lead to the Baptist's death allows women to ponder the repercussions of their actions. Choices of faithfulness and reward or rejection and disgust are laid out in the fres-

[53] Codell emphasizes the reality of the city in the Evangelist scenes, taking it as the heart of the iconography to read the frescoes in a secular light: "Giotto translates the religious themes of rebirth and resurrection into civic themes," p. 613. While this interpretation is ingenious, it ignores the primary function of the chapel as a religious burial space and fails to account for an audience that would have inferred the messages she proposes.

[54] Codell, p. 599.

[55] Elizabeth and Drusiana are described in Jacobus da Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, ed. and trans. Granger Ryan and Helmut Ripperger, (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1948), pp. 323, 58–59.

coes, with a message particularly pointed at female viewers who appear as both sinners and saint in the frescoes. It is hard to imagine that the Peruzzi women would not have seen themselves in the narratives, reading the consequences of sin and the rewards of devotion. The message of the availability of Christ's redemption, even for the ordinary and particularly for women, thus could become their central understanding of the chapel's decoration.

The lay patrons, like the Franciscans, would have interacted with Giotto's frescoes in diverse ways at different times. Although we cannot confirm how often or in what circumstances the patrons entered their chapels, funerals and commemorative masses were surely the primary functions that occurred within them.[56] In the sobering context of a family death, visitors to the chapels may well have dwelled on the inevitability of earthly loss and the hope for heavenly reward. For males that reward might be assured in the mere existence of the chapels with their redemptory fresco cycles; businessmen could look with satisfaction on the paintings of John's and Francis's souls ascending to God, since those representations were made possible by their financial support. Women could not claim the same ownership of the scenes, but they might equally find a place for themselves within the images. By reading the Francis Cycle as an intercessory prayer and the John cycles as exempla of the access to the divine available to ordinary believers, they could interpret their own spiritual lives as leading them on a path to salvation.

The religious milieu of the Bardi and Peruzzi Chapels at Santa Croce was defined by their function as sites for services and burials, and Giotto's frescoes were designed to work within that context, offering a variety of audiences access to the pursuit of redemption. The path to salvation was not, however, a singular one; the parallels laid out by the artist in the cycles of the lives of Sts. Francis, John the Baptist, and John the Evangelist allowed viewers to bring their own perspectives to bear on links among the images. Didactic, devotional, exemplary, disquieting, consolatory, real, and mystical, the frescoes were open to multivalent readings by their viewers. Whether spectators were clerical or secular, male or female, practicing a Christian life in the mundane world or searching to move into the heavenly realm, their interactions with the frescoes would have determined how they interpreted the meaning of Giotto's paintings.

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[56] Giurescu, pp. 205–11.

12. THE GUIDING ILLUSIONS OF THE MORRISON TRIPTYCH

Mark Tucker and Lloyd DeWitt

The Morrison Triptych (Toledo Museum of Art, USA) (figs. 12.1, 12.2) is a visually stunning, beautifully preserved masterpiece of early Flemish painting. Most likely made in Antwerp around 1500, it presents Adam and Eve standing in niches on the outside of the wings which, when opened, show John the Baptist and John the Evangelist in a continuous loggia with the Virgin and Child who sit enthroned on the triptych's center panel between two angels holding musical instruments. The

Fig. 12.1 Master of the Morrison Triptych, *The Morrison Triptych* (open), *c*. 1500, center panel 97.5 × 60.4 centimeters, wings 110.8 × 37.2 centimeters. Purchased with funds from the Libbey Endowment, Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1954.5A–C. Photo: M. Tucker.

Fig. 12.2 *The Morrison Triptych*, exterior, each panel 110.8 × 37.2 centimeters. Photo: J. Mikuliak, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Fig. 12.3 *The Morrison Triptych*, interior, in *c.* 1954 frame. Photo: Toledo Museum of Art.

composition is a loose copy of the *St. John Altarpiece* of *c.* 1480–88 by Hans Memling (*c.* 1433–1494), (fig. 12.4) and while the identity of the artist remains uncertain, the triptych leaves no doubt of his extraordinary abilities. The work's overall elegance, refinement of execution, and visual richness are most immediately apparent. What particularly distinguishes it within the early Netherlandish canon, though, is the sophistication of novel perceptual and symbolic effects that arose from the artist's engagement with ideas about framing and with illusionistic and interactive potentialities of the specific site for which the triptych was commissioned. The resulting effects and illusions, the subject of this essay, which were lost with the reframing and relocation of the panels later in their history, have only been discovered in the course of study and restoration within the past decade. Though the triptych's original location is not known, nor the patron for whom it was created, analysis of its construction and pictorial geometry have revealed remarkably specific indications of the way it appeared in its original location and was experienced by its original audience.

Fig. 12.4 Hans Memling *Altarpiece with the two Saints John*, interior, *c.* 1480–1488, center panel 69 × 47 centimeters, wings 63.5 × 18.5 centimeters. Photo: Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Gemäldegalerie, GG939.

Upon entering the chapel space for which the Morrison Triptych was painted around 1500, the altarpiece would have provided the viewer with an extraordinary vision. Set on an altar table before an ochre-colored backdrop, the closed Morrison Triptych appeared not as a conventional painted altarpiece comprising individually framed wing panels, but as a freestanding, solid slab of veined red marble with faceted niches carved into it, supported by a pedestal of matching marble. Projecting from the niches, octagonal socles of variegated stone, one green, the other yellow, supported the figures of Adam and Eve respectively. The illusion of the triptych's being something other than a painted work would attain an intensity perhaps unprecedented in panel painting; under one specific and fleeting circumstance, daylight of a specific strength, falling from a window above and to the left, would illuminate the tableau and cause the shadow cast by the altarpiece itself on the ocher-colored surface behind it to coincide perfectly

in depth of tone and angle with shadows cast by Adam and Eve in their illusionistically painted, red marble niches. At that instant, an ingeniously conceived and crafted effect of *trompe-l'oeil* produced an astonishing illusion of the figures' presence within the viewer's space. This finely tuned effect was the result of the artist's foreknowledge and analysis of the display conditions specific to a particular chapel. Because the painted image is so strongly tied to the specific visual character of surrounding elements of that chapel and its lighting, the living presence of the figures became as palpable as the space enveloping them, a space occupied by the altarpiece, the altar on which it rested, and the beholder.

Under the sway of this remarkable sight, and drawn toward the altar, one would, on approaching, realize that this vision was an illusion—not a stone altar presenting figures in the round, but the panels of a painted triptych. The visual ambiguity stemmed most directly from the fact that the wings of the Morrison Triptych lacked frames that conventionally divide such an altarpiece's exterior into side-by-side compartments and proclaim a boundary between the viewer's space and the fictive space of the work of art. The figures of John the Baptist and John the Evangelist, revealed when the wings were opened, produced a similar sensation of projection into the viewer's sphere, again owing to the absence of frames on their side of the panels. Freed from Netherlandish panel paintings' ubiquitous circumscribing border—that window at which actual and pictorial reality meet—the outsize figures loom in the foreground. Only the center panel of the triptych had a frame demarcating a zone of miraculous unreality. Though the center panel appears otherwise spatially integrated with the wings to either side, sharing landscape and architecture, the frame, as is customary, sets the figures of the center panel within a differentiated, more sacred realm, conspicuously and emphatically so because of the contrast with the frameless wings.

The artist's dispensing with conventional framing of panel paintings in the interest of both merging and drawing distinctions between the depicted and the directly experienced is one dimension of his anticipation of possible interactions with the altarpiece; another is his deft manipulation of pictorial space. The Morrison Master's command of linear perspective allowed him to guide the viewer—whose attention is initially captured by the startling vision of the closed exterior—to specific points on the approach to the altarpiece. The space depicted

on the closed wings and that of the open triptych are exactingly constructed to two different schemes of perspective. Analysis of each has indicated the unique points in the viewer's space at which pictorial space appears with maximum verisimilitude, points that suggest specific moments of interaction with the work.

What we have learned of the means by which the artist anticipated the altarpiece's viewing conditions and guided viewer's perceptions and interactions is drawn from information of a specificity rare in the study of early Netherlandish painting. We have established the precise parameters of the painting's accurately constructed pictorial spaces, the exact size of its now-lost frame, the height at which it was likely installed, even the color of the original altar backdrop, and the exact angle and intensity of light required to make its three-dimensional illusion most striking. The findings reveal the painter's will to engage the Morrison Triptych's original physical surroundings to produce effects and sensations that differed markedly from those associated with hermetic devotional images that exclude or transcend the worldly environment. Conclusions of the present study were applied to the triptych's reframing and display in 2004, after its most recent cleaning and restoration. It is now installed at Toledo in a way that revives principal components of the original presentation, allowing present-day viewers to appreciate some of the most remarkable qualities the triptych presented to its original audience about five centuries ago.

The Toledo triptych is the work of the anonymous early sixteenth-century Antwerp artist dubbed the "Master of the Morrison Triptych" by Max J. Friedländer, who identified the oeuvre in 1915.[1] Although

[1] Max J. Friedländer, "Der Meister der Morrison Triptychons," *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* 27 (1915), pp. 13–14. The first known owner of the triptych, the textile heir and collector Alfred Morrison, claimed that the work was brought from Spain in the nineteenth century. The work still bears Morrison's name, assigned to it by Max J. Friedländer who recognized, in an article of 1915, that it was not by Memling, but by an anonymous 16th century Antwerp master. He detected the same hand at work in the *c.* 1504 *Adoration of the Magi* panels in the John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art (Fig. 5), the *c.* 1500 *Virgin and Child in a Landscape*, National Gallery, London, (fig. 13.13) and a 1503 altarpiece in the Church of the Savior,Valladolid. (fig. 12.6) It remained at Fonthill House, Morrison's residence in Wiltshire, until his death in 1897. It passed from his widow to his son Hugh, then to his son John before being placed with the dealers Rosenberg and Stiebel in New York, from whom the Toledo Museum of Art acquired it in 1954, as a gift of Edward Drummond Libbey. Toledo Museum of Art, *European Paintings* (Toledo: The Museum, 1976), p. 108. Despite the connection to Spain, the specific original conditions of display determined by the present study suggest that it was more likely created for a Flemish patron.

the composition derives from Hans Memling's triptych of the *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Sts. John the Baptist and John the Evangelist* (Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, *c.* 1480–1488), (figs. 12.4, 12.5) its style and date are of the next generation. The late Gothic architecture on display in the interior of the Morrison Triptych, with its openwork tracery and classicizing motifs, is the most distinctive departure by the Morrison Master from the earlier Gothic portals in Memling's altarpiece that served as his model. As Matt Kavaler has explained, an exuberant new style of Renaissance Gothic architecture was broadly adopted in Flanders after 1500, and was frequently illustrated in Antwerp paintings of the period.[2] The Morrison Triptych is one of many Antwerp works that "revive" famous masterpieces of the Flemish Golden Age, such as the Master of 1499's diptych *The Virgin in a Church with Christiaan de Hondt* (Antwerp, Koninklijke Museum voor Schone Kunsten) and Jan Gossaerts's diptych *Virgin in a Church with Antonio Siciliano and Saint Anthony* (*c.* 1513, Rome, Galleria Doria Pamphilj)—which both repeat Jan Van Eyck's *Madonna in a Church* (*c.* 1437–1439, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie)—and Joos van Cleve's *Deposition* (*c.* 1518–1520, Philadelphia, John G. Johnson Collection), which sets Rogier van der Weyden's *Descent from the Cross* (*c.* 1435) in a landscape.[3]

The Morrison Master is not mainly a copyist, however, and the rest of his attributed works are original compositions. This triptych, as do many works based on canonical earlier paintings, departs from its source, and in so doing, illuminates the artist's own abilities and character, as well as changing taste. The evidence presented below shows that the Morrison Triptych is an unusual, even unique, highly self-conscious interpretation of the triptych form. Its ambitions and sophistication are remarkable, founded in the fifteenth century's dazzling

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Moreover, the elaborate architecture the artist inserted into Memling's composition corresponds to a vogue local to Flanders around 1500 (see note 2).

[2] Prominent examples of this style include the Royal Monastery at Brou (begun 1506) and the same tower of Antwerp Cathedral that the Master of the Morrison Triptych pictures under construction in the *c.* 1504 *Adoration of the Magi* (Fig. 14, John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art). Ethan Matt Kavaler, "Renaissance Gothic in the Netherlands: The Uses of Ornament," *Art Bulletin* 82/2 (June 2000), p. 226, 223, 239. Jan van der Stock, *Antwerp, Story of a Metropolis* (Antwerp: Hessenhuis, 1993), p. 53.

[3] On the dispersal of Rogier van der Weyden's *Deposition* iconography in Spanish painting, see Amy Powell, "The Errant Image: Rogier van der Weyden's Deposition from the Cross and its Copies," *Art History* 29/4 (2006), pp. 707–28.

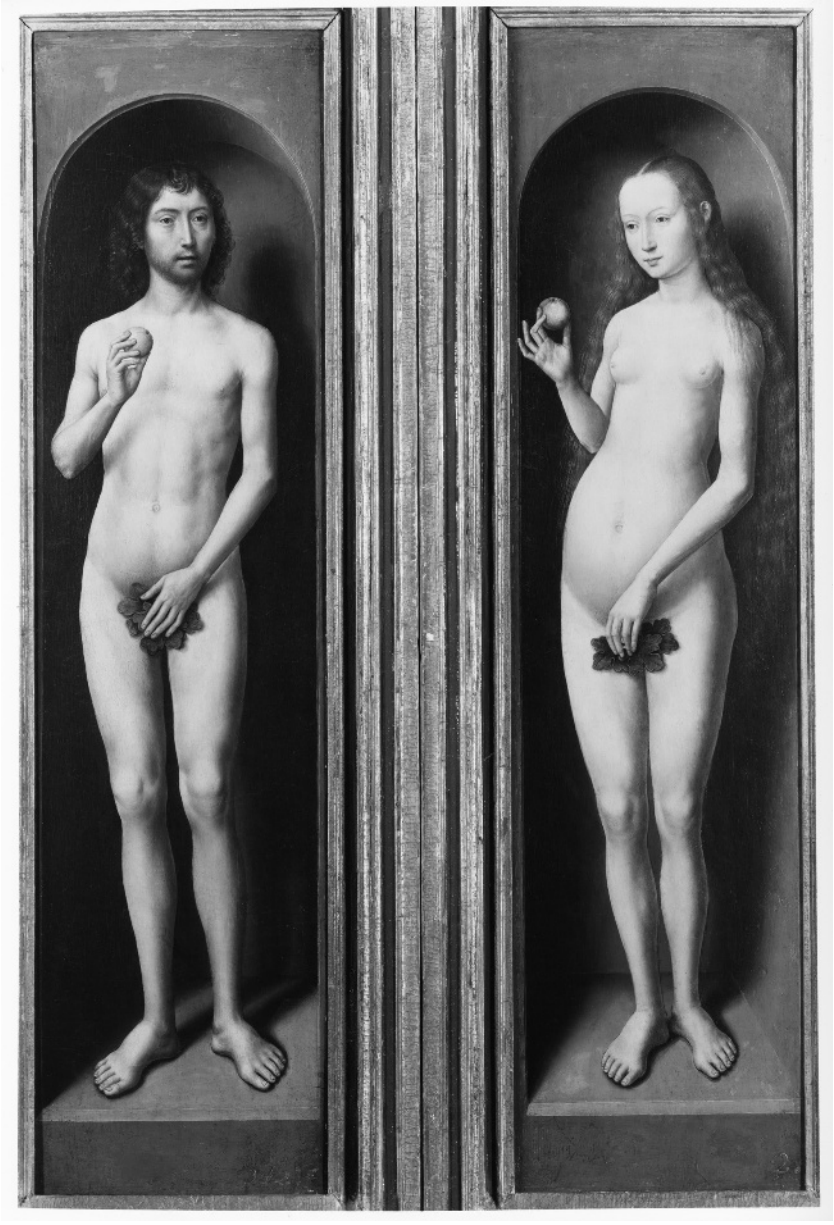

Fig. 12.5 Hans Memling *Altarpiece with the Two Saints John*, exterior, each panel 69.3 × 17.3 centimeters. Photo: Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, Gemäldegalerie, GG994a, b.

analysis and objective representation of the visible world. Extending from those artistic developments, the painter of the triptych set for himself the daunting aim—in this one work, at least—of providing no less than a new standard and mode of illusionism. The triptych's success in this regard is the product of the artist's mastery of visual and technical means. Just as importantly, though, it springs from his grasp of perceptual and symbolic possibilities in contradicting contemporary viewers' expectation that structurally integral or engaged frames, by long and consistent tradition, were a necessary, fundamentally defining complement to paintings on panel. The premise of the Morrison Triptych's extraordinary illusions was that a traditional painted altarpiece panel has a frame, and one that does not—such as this triptych's wings—can appear as something other.

It is easy to understand how earlier writers, such as Friedländer and Davies, lacking knowledge of the triptych's original form and the necessary conditions of configuration and display that activated its most intriguing concepts and illusions, assigned it to a tier of middling interest in the greater historical and aesthetic scheme.[4] The remarkable effects considered here, which were pursued intently and methodically in the triptych's creation, were by nature evanescent, being critically dependent on an unusual original framing configuration (changed later to a conventional form) and display conditions specific to the particular chapel space for which it was created. Despite the fragility of the illusion in this regard, it has been possible to decipher major elements of the idiosyncratic character of the triptych through close analysis of its physical structure, its geometry and pictorial spaces, aspects of light and color, and the way these factors were inextricably keyed to both its ritual function and the now centuries-lost original physical context. More generally, the refined artifice of the triptych and the response to earlier forms and imagery it represents are vividly revealing of the taste and values of the patron for whom it was created, and more broadly, of its cultural context and certain evolving artistic values around 1500.

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[4] Martin Davies, *Les primitifs flamands: The National Gallery, London* I. (Antwerp: De Sikkel, 1953), p. 5. Max J. Friedländer, "Der Meister des Morrison Triptychons," pp. 13–14. Max J. Friedländer, *Early Netherlandish Painting* IVa., Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff (1971), pp. 89–90.

Discovery of Lost Spatial Coherence and Unique Form

By 1954, when the panels of the Morrison Triptych were acquired by the Toledo Museum of Art, knowledge of the sophistication of its ingenious, recondite illusionism was lost. At that time it was fitted with a modern frame of quasi-historical form—each panel was surrounded by a molding suggestive of Gothic profiles, with the slanting sills across the bottom that are typical of early Netherlandish frames. This frame was a reasonable attempt to evoke typical period presentation, based on the belief that the Morrison panels, like so many others of the fifteenth- and early sixteenth centuries, had at some later time been divested of their original engaged frames (frames constructed around the panel in a woodworker's shop for delivery as a structural unit to the artist's studio for final preparation and painting). In framing the Morrison Triptych, the museum encountered an obstacle to creating a conventionally proportioned frame: the center panel is much shorter than the wings. Some discrepancy in panel heights within a triptych is normal, due to use of different widths of moldings for the center panel and the wings. The height difference in the Morrison Triptych was so marked, however, that it resisted being disguised by the modern frame's extremely wide sill across the bottom of the center panel and an anomalous space-filling narrow panel across the top.[5] (fig. 12.3) The impression thus given was of compensation for a triptych whose center panel had been cut down, and indeed, the truncation of the architecture at the top of that panel and of the foreground at its bottom, when compared with the wings, seemed to confirm the alteration.

The well-meaning attempt to conventionally frame the panels disrupted the triptych's original geometry and unified space. This was confirmed when the panels were removed from the 1950's frames and positioned so that the single-point perspective on the triptych's interior scene, as indicated by the orthogonals in the paving, was re-established, also restoring the regular interval of the background arches. These pictorial indications dictated the proper lateral relationship of the panels: the vertical edges of the paint surfaces had originally been exactly 7.2 centimeters apart. This was an oddly narrow gap to have

[5] The difficulty previously had been confronted, as shown in the illustration of the triptych provided in Friedländer's 1915 article, by installing the panels in a frame that covered large sections of the wings, top and bottom, to "normalize" their height relative to the center panel.

accommodated typically proportioned side-by-side frames for the center and wings, but the measurement was found to bear directly on the question of the height difference between the panels.

The center panel had not, in fact, been shortened. Around all four edges, it showed the typical margin of bare oak and the *barbe* of ground that indicate an originally engaged frame. The painted surfaces of the wings, by contrast, lack the center panel's margin of bare oak, extending to the very edges of the panels, on both the interiors (bearing the figures of Sts. John the Baptist and John the Evangelist) and the exteriors (bearing the figures of Adam and Eve.) Such a complete lack of evidence of engaged frames is typical of the edges of a fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century triptych panels that had been cropped, which, if true in this case, would have meant that the height difference between the wings and the center panel would have been even more pronounced. An explanation for both the height discrepancy and the relatively narrow lateral separations of the paint surfaces suggested itself when it was noted that the wings, when aligned correctly with respect to the depicted space on the interior, extend 7.2 centimeters above the center panel's painted area and just slightly more below. The clear indication was that the center panel alone had had a frame, of 7.2 centimeters' width, with a slightly wider bottom member, and that the wings were frameless from the start—flat shutter doors painted to their very edges.

Frameless triptych wings are rare among Netherlandish triptychs, and are unknown on any works of this size and sophistication. Frames typically constituted the primary structural support for polyptych panels, providing stout stock into the edges of which the hinge leaves could be nailed. The Morrison Master's wish to eliminate frames from the wings required that the hinges be fastened directly, strongly, and nearly invisibly to wing panels less than 1.5 centimeters thick, insufficient for the customary attachment of hinges using nails driven into the more robust stock of a frame.[6] In this instance, old restorations to

[6] In 1953 the panels were transferred by conservator William Suhr from their oak supports onto masonite. A veneer thickness of the center panel's perimeter margin of unpainted oak was preserved. Dealer photographs in the Toledo object file show the panels pre-transfer and confirm observations concerning the frameless wings and the manner in which they were hinged. The original panel thickness is not recorded, but see Hélène Verougstraete-Marcq and Roger Van Schoute, *Cadres et supports dans la peinture flamande aux 15e et 16e siècles* Hélène Verougstraete-Marcq, Heure-le-Romain, (1989), pp. 11–12, concerning the 1494 Antwerp guild regulations specifying a thickness equivalent to 1.3 modern centimeters for wing panels of this size.

the paint surface were found to cover evidence of a rare type of wing mounting: "fiche" hinges, one leaf of which was inserted into a deep slot cut into the edge of the panel itself and held there by a pin driven through its thickness.[7] The triptych's having been configured for frameless wings was further indicated by the fact that when an allowance for the width of the center panel's 7.2 centimeter-wide frame was made and the wings were pivoted on the points at which hinges would have attached to that frame, they closed to meet exactly in the center to form the image of a continuous piece of figured red marble, with veins painted as continuing perfectly across the edge where the panels meet.[8]

Having established by pictorial geometry and evidence of original mounting that the wings were frameless, the question of what extraordinary artistic objective had motivated the decision to diverge sharply from the form of presentation so characteristic of Netherlandish panel painting came to the fore. This decision to do so engaged formal and symbolic meanings inherent in the tradition of Netherlandish frames, certainly, but it also enabled the artist to conflate image, object, and surrounding space, immediate reality, and sacred imagery.

Implications and effects of frameless wings

In addition to serving a practical support function, and providing a decorative perimeter, frames surrounding Netherlandish paintings of religious subjects also signified the threshold between sacred and earthly realms.[9] With moldings and sills imitative of church windows and doors, they formed a symbolic opening onto a holy space, eternal and perfect, simultaneously separating it from secular reality.

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[7] Verougstraete-Marcq and Van Schoute, *Cadres et supports*, pp. 11–12.

[8] Another confirmation of this direct, edge-to-edge meeting of the wings was discovered beneath restorations on the exterior: an old circular mark abraded through the paint, caused by the repeated rotation of a now-missing hook closure on the right panel to engage in an eye on the left one to hold the wings closed. On the intriguing idea of fictive stone as reference to the apostle Peter's notion of the church and believers as "living stone" see Marion Grams-Thieme, *Lebendige Steine: Studien zur niederländischn Grisaillemalerei des 15. und frühen 16. Jahrhunderts* (Cologne: Böhlau, 1988), pp. 54–58.

[9] Harbison, "Visions and Meditations", pp. 108–109. Bret Rothstein, *Sight and Spirituality in Early Netherlandish Painting* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 142–144.

Considering such well known examples of original framing as Jan van Eyck's *Madonna in a Church* (*c.* 1437–1439, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie) or Rogier van der Weyden's *Medici Madonna* (*c.* 1450–1455, Frankfurt, Städelisches Kunstinstitut) it can be understood how eliminating this threshold would have the effect of rendering indistinct the physical, visual, and spiritual separation between observer and subject. With the triptych opened, the frame of the center panel established the customary sense of heavenly remove, separating the miraculous vision of the serene Virgin holding the Child flanked by music-making angels from those of the two saints.[10] The conceptual distancing is emphasized by the contrast with the frameless wings to either side. The saints on the wings occupy an architectural and landscape setting otherwise continuous with the center panels', but the absence of frames on the wings promotes a vivid sense that they exist more in the viewer's space than is usual. This sense is reinforced by the placement of these figures at the very forward edge of the stone sill on which they stand, and their markedly larger scale compared to their Memling counterparts. Physically, visually, and spiritually they are closer to viewers than are the heavenly figures set within the center frame, befitting their role as intercessors and mediators between humanity and God. By contrast, the frame on the central panel emphatically differentiates and exalts the triptych's holiest figures, though they share the unified architectural and landscape setting that continues onto the wings. The stepping-up of sanctity from wings to center that results from framing only the center panel adds a novel variation to the conventional hierarchical scheme that is a fundamental organizing concept of Netherlandish winged altarpieces, calling for an effect of increasing material opulence and sanctity as one progresses from the altarpiece exterior to its interior.[11]

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[10] On the relation of the sacrament of the Eucharist to the Virgin and Child enthroned in heaven see Barbara G. Lane, *The Altar and the Altarpiece* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), pp. 21–24.

[11] Lynn F. Jacobs, *Early Netherlandish Carved Altarpieces 1380–1550* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 88–89. A measure of how vivid and real the artist felt the presence of the divine should be is given in Morrison Master's 1504 *Mass of St. Gregory* (fig. 12.6, Valladolid), where the dramatic figure of Christ, seen from the side, rises from a sarcophagus and steps onto the altar slab before St. Gregory. The background of this scene, in which the tools of the passion appear, is also based on a work by Memling, in this case the *Virgin showing the Man of Sorrows c.* 1475 (Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria). See also Harbison, "Visions and Meditations," *Simiolus* 15/2 (1985), p. 91.

The frameless wing interiors offer visual and metaphorical parallels for a continuity between the open altarpiece's miraculous vision and the viewer's own space, mediated by the saints that appear to inhabit both. The triptych's exterior projects the figures of Adam and Eve into the viewer's space similarly, but it draws upon the absence of frames in an additional way, creating a uniquely striking illusion of immediacy and full continuum with the space surrounding the altar and the devotee. The triptych exterior is an ingenious, painstakingly executed feat of *trompe l'oeil*, persuading the viewer of its three-dimensionality through explicit references to and interaction with the specific setting and conditions of light in which it could on occasion be seen. (fig. 12.7) The forms are painted in a way that indicates a precise direction and intensity of illumination, observed and rendered so carefully by the artist that under a specific level of illumination the shadow cast by the rectangular form of the altarpiece itself onto the surface behind it would appear perfectly consistent with the modeling and shadows depicted within the painting. The proof of this is that, amazingly, as part of the conceit, the painter has given us both the color of the backdrop against which the triptych was seen and the depth of the shadow sometimes cast upon it by the altarpiece.

The clue to this long-lost color and the light that occasionally illuminated the altarpiece is seen to either side of the pedestal that the Morrison Master painted in imitation of the three-dimensional version that supports many altarpieces. At its far left side, outside the edge of the red marble face, bordered top and bottom by the profile of the gray stone cap and base, there is an area of mottled ocher color, and the corresponding area at the far right is an umber tone. Though not immediately apparent, these areas represent negative space, a recession to the wall outside and behind the pedestal, and the difference in color between left and right represents the lit and shaded tone of the ocher color.

Pursuing this point, as an experiment the closed wings were placed against a matching ocher-colored surface. When the light falling from the left was adjusted to the correct intensity, the umber color at the right matched the color of the shadow cast onto the ocher-colored backdrop to the right by the wings, and the illusion of a three-dimensional pedestal instantly emerged. At that moment, the illusion of the three-dimensionality of the figures of Adam and Eve, the receding niches behind them, and the projecting socles beneath became eerily complete. From a distance of about three meters or more, the

figures appeared most convincingly present, freestanding with open space surrounding them. The key to this remarkable illusion lies in the Morrison Master's masterfully calibrated depiction of the fictive forms as receiving exactly the same illumination as that casting the shadow of the solid, tangible altarpiece onto the surface behind it.

The painting includes one further particularly notable clue to the pitch of illusion being pursued through its blending of pictorial and actual space. On the underside of the socle supporting Eve is a peculiar reflection that extends onto the adjacent surface of the gray stone. Consistent with the scheme of lighting throughout, the reflection is cast from beneath and to the left, from an object resting before the center of the altarpiece, and is another poignant indication of the altarpiece's specific and intimate association with its original surroundings and function; it is the reflection of the lobed base of a Eucharistic chalice that sat before the triptych on the altar table, possibly similar in form to the one the Morrison Master shows in the Valladolid altarpiece wings illustrating the *Mass of Saint Gregory*. (fig. 12.6) This detail has a further iconographic implication. The overall *trompe l'oeil* effect of the triptych exterior depended upon a certain transient condition of daylight falling from the front and upper left, perhaps even related to a specific time of the day and year. Even when that condition was not present, however, and the general illusion weakened or absent, the reflection of the chalice—even with the vessel itself removed—was painted to persist. (fig. 12.7) This set up a key iconographic interaction, and a tour-de-force achievement of it: light from the chalice, which bore the transubstantiated blood of Christ, the ultimate and redemptive sacrament, is reflected constantly (and with the chalice removed, mystically) onto the socle supporting Eve, referring to her agency in the Fall and her redemption through Christ, whom she bore, in a sense, as her descendant.

That beam of the sun's light reflected from the chalice containing the real presence of Christ, may have a more specific connotation, as it recalls the words of the evangelist John (portrayed on the right wing), when describing John the Baptist (portrayed on the left wing) as the prophet and forerunner of Christ. He called the Baptist "a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world (John 1:7–9 NIV). The Morrison Master shows the Evangelist carrying the miraculous chalice that was his traditional attribute having been

Fig. 12.6 Master of the Morrison Triptych, *Mass of St. Gregory*, exterior of altarpiece wings, 1503, Iglesia de San Salvador, Valladolid. Whole wing 237 × 142 centimeters. Photo: Copyright KIK-IRPA, Brussels.

spared from being killed after drinking poison from such a vessel, a transparent reference to the Eucharist.[12]

Perspective and the viewer's position and movements

While the triptych's unusual framing and *trompe l'oeil* effects were calculated to engage the viewer's perception in ways that would create a novel and heightened subjective response to the imagery, the artist

[12] Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Ryan and Helmut Ripperberger (New York: Arno Press, 1969), p. 61.

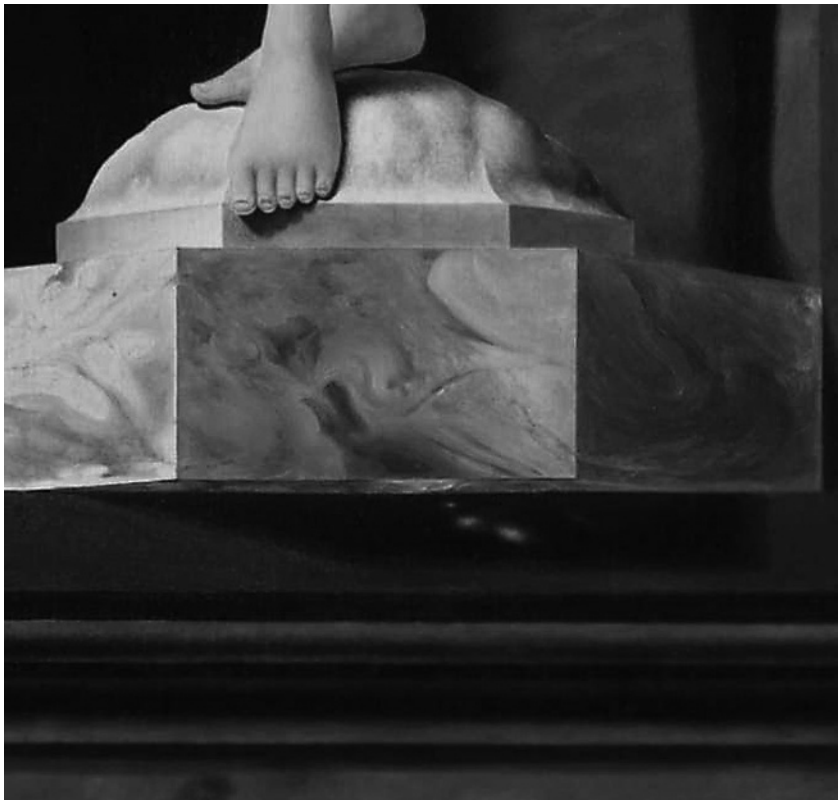

Fig. 12.7 *The Morrison Triptych*, exterior, detail of right wing showing reflection under socle supporting Eve. Photo: J. Mikuliak, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

also structured the depicted pictorial spaces with reference to certain locations in the chapel and to the viewer's movement through it. The artist employed true linear perspective—the projected orthogonals of the interior and exterior images converge to precise vanishing points that accurately indicate the location of the viewer relative to the picture plane at points of maximum spatial illusion, allowing the movement between them to be analyzed. Infrared reflectography reveals that the octagonal socle supporting the figure of Eve was the product of an elaborate spatial construction at the underdrawing phase.[13] (fig. 12.9)

[13] An IRR examination report by Molly Faries of August 1992 in the Toledo Museum of Art object file details the character of the underdrawing detected on each panel and changes between the underdrawing and painting stages. The report

Fig. 12.8 *The Morrison Triptych* exterior, with reconstruction by M. Tucker of original installation. M. Tucker.

This underdrawing yields information about the placement of the altar and the viewing distance to which the perspective of the whole exterior is keyed. (fig. 12.10) All orthogonals perpendicular to the picture plane converge precisely on a point of sight centered, but not explicitly indicated, on the vertical line at which the closed wing panels

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concludes with Faries's observation of the potential usefulness of a precise interpretation of the underdrawn perspective of the Eve panel, undertaken here. The IRR study of the Adam and Eve panels by Tucker in March 2004 provided the basis for the present study of the altarpiece exterior's perspective. Only the socle supporting Eve exhibits the lines of perspectival construction carried out at the underdrawing stage. It was only necessary to thus construct one of the socles; apparently the form was then flipped by some transfer method as a shortcut for the Adam socle, which shows only contours. Whether the artist's choice to construct Eve's socle instead of Adam's was arbitrary is unknown.

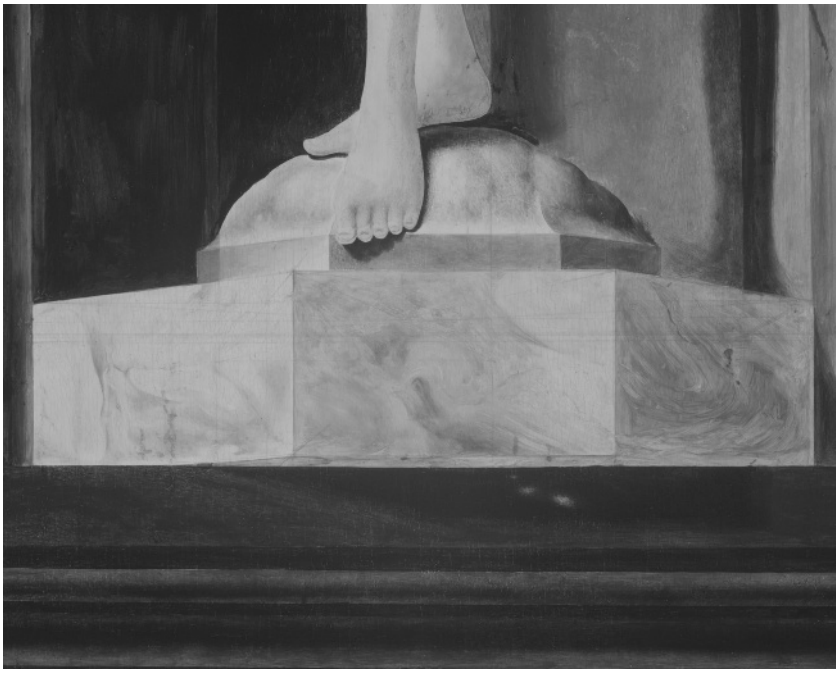

Fig. 12.9 *The Morrison Triptych*, infrared reflectogram detail of Eve and socle beneath her on the exterior of the right wing. IRR image produced by a Hamamatsu C1000-03 infrared vidicon camera equipped with an N2606 tube. Reflectogram assembly by J. Mikuliak, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

meet, intersected by a horizon line 13.5 centimeters from the bottom of the panels, that is, across the middle of the marble face of the illusionistic altarpiece pedestal. As the truest perspective illusion occurs when this horizon coincides with the height of the observer's eye, and high illusion was the order of the day, we can infer an approximate range for the height at which it the triptych was installed. We do not know for whom the triptych was made or that individual's height, but assuming an average adult height of about 155 for Northern European women and 167 centimeters for Northern European men at the time, eye height for the horizon line on the exterior can be placed between about 145 and 157 centimeters. This places the bottom of the triptych and the surface of the altar on that it rested somewhere between about 131 and 143 centimeters above the chapel floor, and suggests the altar

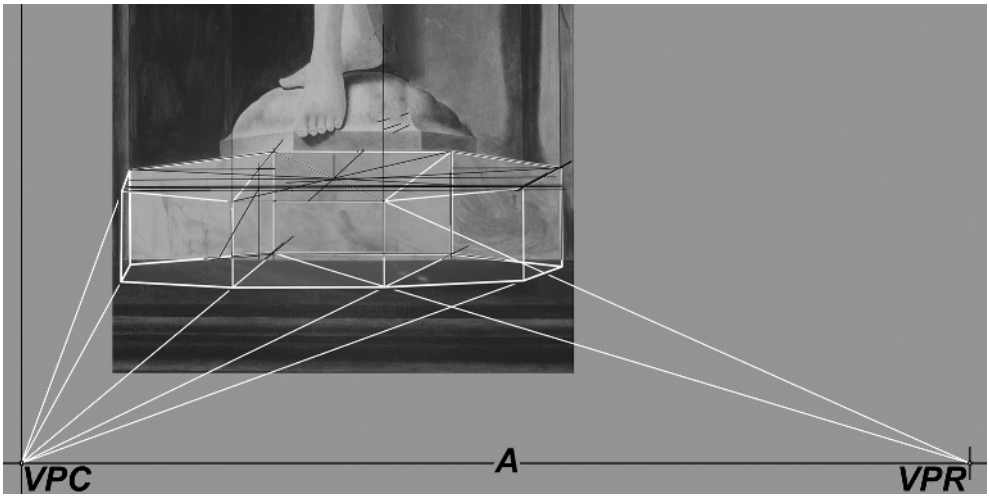

Fig. 12.10 *The Morrison Triptych*, detail of the exterior of the right wing with diagram of perspective construction of octagonal socle (shaded in color) supporting Eve. The artist's underdrawing as revealed by IRR is transcribed in black lines. Added white lines show the completed form and convergence on the horizon line (A) of orthogonals and 45-degree diagonals on the center (VPC) and right (VPR) vanishing points respectively. The distance between VPC and VPR, 53 centimeters, is the viewing distance for which the perspective was constructed. Diagram: M. Tucker.

was elevated on a stepped dais of the type seen beneath a number of surviving altars and depictions of altars.[14] (fig. 12.12)

The underdrawing of the socle also tells us the viewing distance at which the perspective is most convincing.[15] That distance is provided by the location of the left and right vanishing points, the points at which the receding 45-degree diagonals visible in the underdrawn construction converge. These vanishing points fall 53 centimeters to either side of the line of sight. A basic principle of perspective places the viewer that same distance from the picture plane for the optimum illusion of perspective. A viewing distance of 53 centimeters is too close to the picture for the brilliant *trompe l'oeil* effects described earlier to work.

[14] Richard H. Steckel, "New Light on the 'Dark Ages': The Remarkably Tall Stature of Northern European Men during the Medieval Era," *Social Science History* 28 (Summer 2004), pp. 211–228.

[15] The left and right vanishing points, established by receding 45-degree diagonals visible in, or deducible from, the underdrawn construction, fall 53 centimeters to either side of the line of sight. A basic principle of perspective places the viewer that same distance from the picture plane for the optimum illusion of perspective.

This seems contradictory, but our own experience viewing the triptych has shown that the steeply pitched perspective that corresponds to the close viewing distance does not conspicuously compromise the illusion, which depends upon a more distant viewpoint. This is because the visual indicators of spatial recession are not insistent; though the precise convergence of orthogonals can be seen in the underdrawing, no receding lines appear in the finished painting to indicate the viewer's ideal position relative to depicted forms. Even the steep recession of the niche arches' undersides is painted in low enough contrast with the surrounding red marble that it is not very apparent at a distance. Nevertheless, at a certain point in the approach to the altarpiece, the perspective does exert on the viewer a subtle pull toward resolution (a device that would have been appreciated especially by *cognoscenti* who understood the precepts of linear perspective.) That resolution occurs at a distance where the true material nature of the image—and the power of the illusion just experienced—becomes completely apparent: at arm's length, the distance at which the wings can be opened to reveal the interior.

At that point—upon opening—the viewer's navigation of the triptych's levels of apparent reality, as well as the artist's calculated phased engagement with the altarpiece, continues. The space of the *interior* scene is defined across all three panels by consistent one-point perspective, converging on a vanishing point located on the vertical centerline that passes through the proper right eye of the Virgin. (fig. 12.11) The intersection with the horizon—the vanishing point—falls just above her hairline, shifted upward from the level of the exterior's vanishing point by 50 centimeters, corresponding logically to the height of the altar dais ascended by the celebrant and concomitant raising of eye level. The approach to the altarpiece and its opening thus represent both a physical and spiritual elevation. Unlike the triptych's exterior, the illusion of its interior space is based more in its perspective than in its resonance with lighting conditions within the chapel. The implicit viewing distance is also greater, the perspective achieving maximum illusionistic stability at a distance of 119 centimeters at which the open altarpiece fills a wide, but still comfortable, field of vision.[16] It is also

[16] This distance can be derived, again, from distance of the left or right vanishing point from the line of sight, those points established for the triptych's interior by convergence of receding diagonals of the floor paving oriented at 45 degrees off the line of sight. The field of vision subtends an angle of about 64 degrees.

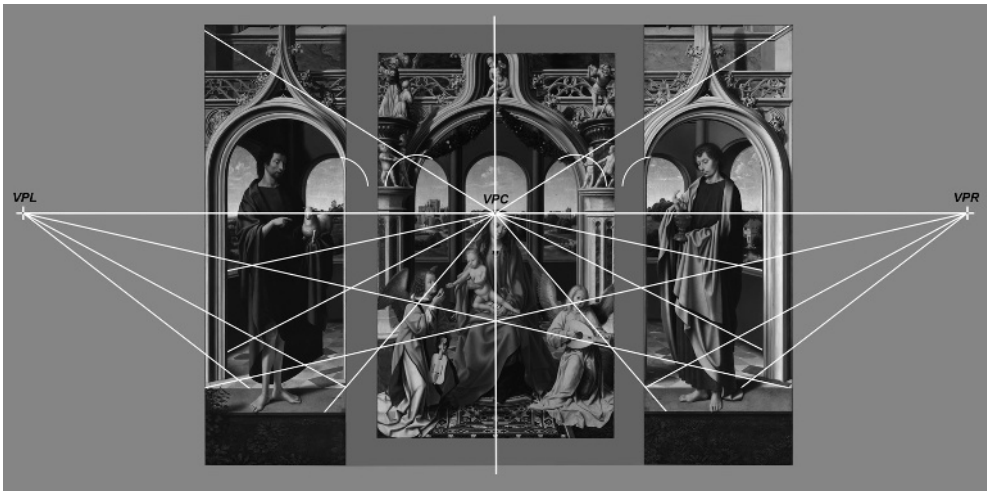

Fig. 12.11 *The Morrison Triptych* interior, showing alignment of the of panels when the regular interval of the arches is restored across the gap between the panels. In this alignment orthogonals converge on the center, left, and right vanishing points (labeled VPC, VPL, and VPR, respectively.) The resulting 7.2 cm-wide perimeter around the center panel (shaded gray here) is the width of the original frame. The horizon along which the vanishing points occur corresponds to the ideal eye height of the viewer. The viewing distance for which the artist constructed this perspective is the distance from the center vanishing point to either the left or right vanishing point, or 119 centimeters. Photo: Toledo Museum of Art.

a plausible position for the celebrant during the elevation of the host during the Eucharist. (fig. 12.12)

When the triptych was open, the surface of the wings, hinged as they had to be at the front outer edge of the center frame to allow closing, was necessarily forward of the center panel's. The painter's compensation for this physical discontinuity of the plane of the panel surfaces confirms how finely calibrated every aspect of the illusion was: to preserve the illusion of the continuity of space between center panel and wings, the artist slightly reduced—by only about 6 millimeters—the distance between horizontals of the balustrade and of the paving ledge at bottom so that the lines would appear unbroken when seen from the ideal viewing height and distance.

The viewing distance indicated by the open triptych—the artist's suggested position for someone standing directly before it at the altar—establishes a range that accommodates the need for legibility of the visual opulence of the scene and its rich detail, while not drawing the viewer so close that the materiality of the paint begins to assert

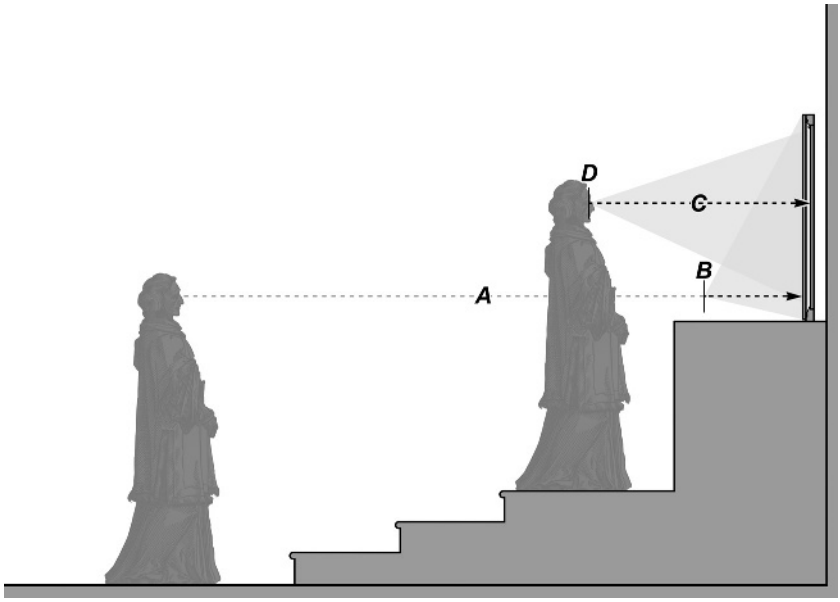

Fig. 12.12 Diagram showing the ideal viewing positions of the exterior and interior paintings as determined by linear perspective.(A) is the horizon line of the triptych exterior. The station point (B) is the viewing distance for which the artist constructed the perspective; its proximity to the painting beckons the viewer towards the altar. (C) is the horizon line of the open altarpiece's perspective, and (D) the interior painting's station point, indicating the position at which the celebrant would normally stand during the Eucharist. The 50-centimeter difference between the two horizon lines corresponds to the change in the viewer's height on ascending the steps of the altar dais. Diagram: M. Tucker.

itself. So concerned was the artist over this latter potential breakdown of illusion that the handling, particularly of the triptych interior, is geared in every way toward effacement of the process and materials used to create the image, toward an almost obsessive transparency of touch and surface. Edges are sharp and modeling gradations are of nearly unbelievable continuity and subtlety, with little betraying the passing of the artist's hand. Brush marks and surface texture are kept to a minimum. The paint is applied precisely and economically within color areas, with almost no overlap, a sign and result of meticulous planning of the image. The desire to minimize the material thickness of color is expressed in the phenomenon of microscopically fine, regular, parallel striations in the paint indicating the apparent use of a

piece of finely woven cloth wrapped around a finger to remove the raised edge of paint that occurred at the edges of color areas.[17]

The question of artistic identity

The identity of the master is who produced the triptych remains as mysterious as the identity of the patron and the original location.[18] While he identified an unusually small oeuvre of just nine works, Friedländer then criticized the artist, claiming that he "…failed altogether to enter into Memling's formal idiom," unaware of the Morrison Master's actual pursuit of his own apparently distinct formal idiom.[19] The pro-

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[17] The phenomenon is noted also in Roger Marijnissen, *Paintings/ Genuine, Fraud, Fake/ Modern methods of examining paintings* (Brussels: Elsevier, 1985), p. 197, though the question of the tool responsible and the reason for the marks was left open. After encountering them on the Morrison triptych, Tucker speculated that the weave of fine cloth had left the marks, and was able to reproduce the effect in partly set oil paint.

[18] Despite specific references in the work of art, the original location of the Morrison Triptych is not recorded, but the painting contains a number of tantalizing clues that link it to a certain kind of patronage for such works around the time it was made, *c*. 1500. Memling was commissioned to paint the original Altarpiece of Saint John by Jan Crabbe, the head of the Cistercian Abbey of Ter Duinen in Koksijde until his death in1488. Christiaan de Hondt, abbabbot form, abbot at Ter Duinen from 1495 till his death in 1509, in turn commissioned a copy of Crabbe's altarpiece, showing himself as donor in the place of Crabbe (Paris, Musée du Petit Palais). Dirk de Vos, *Hans Memling* (Ghent: Ludion, 1994), pp. 215–216. De Hondt had a taste for copies and versions of famous works as he also commissioned from the Master of 1499 a copy of Van Eyck's *Virgin in a Church* (*c*. 1437–1439, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie) as half of a diptych facing a panel in which he addresses the Virgin while in prayer in his bedroom (1499, Koninklijke Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerp.) John O. Hand, *Portraits and Prayers: unfolding the early Netherlandish diptych* (Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 2006), pp. 101–102, 140–149. The patron saints John the Baptist and John the Evangelist are more appropriate to Jan Crabbe as well as De Hondt's successor Jan IV Teerlinck, (abbot from 1509 till his death in 1515), neither of whose period of rule corresponds to that of the triptych. Despite the connection of the triptych's imagery to this monastery, the lack of donor figures, appropriate patron saints, symbols, or a clear Cistercian reference virtually rules out identifying the contemporary abbot as donor of the Morrison Triptych. Dirk van Clooster, *Abdijwijzer*, www.tenduinen.be, accessed April 17, 2009.

[19] Although interest in hyper-illusionism and clarity connects this master to Gerard David in Bruges, and to the traditions laid down by Van Eyck and Petrus Christus, he seems to have been active in Antwerp, as witnessed by the reference to that city of in the background of the Johnson Collection *Adoration of the Magi* of *c*. 1504 (fig. 12.14) and the obvious debt to Quentin Metsys noted by Friedländer and Gallo. Max J. Friedländer, *Early Netherlandish Painting* Iva, pp. 68–69.Gratiano Nieto Gallo, "El retablo de San Juan Bautista en la iglesia del Salvador de Valladolid, Quentin Metsys o Adriaen Skilleman?" *Boletin del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arqueologia*, *Valladolid* V–VI (1939–40), p. 59. Equally assertive, however, is the debt to Haarlem painting and the work of Geertgen tot Sint Jans that both Valentiner and Wechsler

vocative, hyper-real illusionism of the Morrison Triptych appears again the Gregory Mass of the Valladolid altarpiece (*c.* 1500) (fig. 12.6) and in the beguiling London triptych. (fig. 12.13) That altarpiece, with its glowing screen of tree trunks silhouetted against the twilit sky, and church windows filled by pure yellow paint in solid areas, evokes a kind of divine light. An idiosyncrasy of another order was recently discovered in the Johnson Collection *Adoration of the Magi* altarpiece wings in Philadelphia, where the Morrison Master seems to have extended elements of the frame into the interior architecture, (fig. 12.14) a composition he then placed against the background of his own city, Antwerp, seen from the harbor showing the cathedral tower as construction on it had progressed in 1504, intensifying the immediacy of the work to local viewers. Many of the most distinctive features in this painter's oeuvre reflected expanded possibilities of how illusionism could intensify the experience of the celebrant or worshipper, and guide or position them in the space created by the work of art.

The slight asymmetry of the London triptych's off-center placement of background church introduces an element of casual naturalism not unlike the rhythm of shifts in the color of the marble on the second story of the structure depicted in the interior of the Morrison Triptych. The cropping of the architecture there—showing just the ledges of the second story windows and cutting off the finials of the arches, enhances the sense of accidental encounter and heightens the sense of proximity to the structure (often reinforced by strong perspective). Asymmetry is also a conspicuous feature of the London altarpiece's composition, one tellingly not repeated by the copyist who completed the elaborately expanded and rigidly symmetrical version of the London triptych now in the Escorial.

The Morrison Master's oeuvre is part of the stylistic high point in the development of illusionism and clarity in painting, preceding the advent of the taste for elaborate and artificial decorative profusion

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have explored, noting the daring color, the peculiarly abstracted forms, the effects of light and the love of complex spaces. Wilhelm Valentiner, "Simon van Herlam, the Master of the Morrison Triptych," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 45 (January 1955), pp. 5–10. Paul G. Wescher, "Beiträge zu Simon van Haarlem, dem Meister des Morrison Triptychons," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 7 (1965), pp. 175–188. Part of the coherency of the oeuvre is based on the master's re-use of certain models and figures, for example the model for Adam in the Morrison Triptych reappears as Joseph in the Johnson Collection *Adoration* (*c.* 1504) panels, whose composition is, in turn based on that of the interior of the Vallodolid altarpiece. The Morrison Triptych's angel tuning a *lira di braccia* appears again in the mysterious and beguiling London triptych *Virgin and Saints with Angels* of *c.* 1500. (fig. 12.13)

Fig. 12.13 Master of the Morrison Triptych, *The Virgin with Saints and Angels and the two Saints John, c.* 1500, oil on panel. Center panel 67 × 43.5, wings 67.8 × 17.5 and 67.8 × 17.8 centimeters. Photo: London, National Gallery, NG 1085.

now known as Antwerp Mannerism. This work in particular engages the viewer not only by projecting itself in their space but by optically leading them into the divine presence, more than any other surviving or known work of this period. The Morrison Master used all means available, and invented new ones, in recreating the spiritual approach from the viewer's world that included Adam, Eve and the two Saints John, to the heavenly one of the Virgin and Child, separated only by the now highly artificial barrier of the frame. In eliminating the donor from the "heavenly" space he occupied in Memling's composition, the Morrison Master in fact signaled his reordering of vision. Instead of the Abbot, who had Memling create his experience of the real presence of the Christ child, the Morrison Master gave every viewer the illusion of the same experience of the real presence (also eternally reflected in the painted surface) in a space that extended from the real chapel, a space that whose boundaries, like the frames of the wings, had been erased by art.

Fig. 12.14 Master of the Morrison Triptych, *Adoration of the Magi, c.* 1504, oil on panel, 167 × 108 centimeters. Photo: Philadelphia Museum of Art: John G. Johnson Collection, 1917, Cat. 369.

13. CHRISTIAN CRUSADE AS SPECTACLE: THE CAVALIERI DI SANTO STEFANO AND THE AUDIENCES FOR THE MEDICI WEDDINGS OF 1589 AND 1608

Katherine Poole

Following the model of the other great courts of Europe during the early modern period, the Medici, rulers of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, used nuptial celebrations to evoke their power and prestige through spectacle.[1] The audiences for these grandiose Florentine festivals were twofold, elite and popular. They encompassed princes, ambassadors, and courtiers, as well as the citizens of Florence and the greater Tuscan *dominio* (subject cities). It was equally important for

* I would like to thank Sarah Blake McHam under whose direction I first explored this material for my dissertation, *The Medici Grand Dukes and the Art of Conquest: Ruling Identity and the Formation of a Tuscan Empire, 1537–1609*, completed at Rutgers University in 2007. I am also indebted to my colleagues in the art history department at Kenyon College, especially Sarah Blick, and the participants of the 2008–2009 Kenyon Seminar, whose helpful comments and observations about earlier drafts of this essay helped shape its direction. My thanks also to Heather L. Holian who invited me to present a portion of this research for her panel *Making Connections: The Medici and the Courts of Europe* at the 2009 Renaissance Society of America conference in Los Angeles, CA.

[1] Key sources for Medici festivals of the grand-ducal era include: Giovanna Gaeta Bertelà and Annamaria Petrioli Tofani, eds., *Feste e apparati medicei da Cosimo I a Cosimo II* (Florence: Olschki, 1969); Arthur Blumenthal, *Theater Art of the Medici* (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1980); Blumenthal, "Medici Patronage and the Festival of 1589," in *IL 60: Essays Honoring Irving Lavin on his Sixtieth Birthday*, ed. Marilyn Aronberg Lavin (New York: Italica Press, 1990), pp. 97–106; Alois Nagler, *Theatre Festivals of the Medici, 1539–1637* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1964); James Saslow, *The Medici Wedding of 1589: Florentine Festival as Theatrum Mundi* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996); Anna Maria Testaverde, "Feste Medicee: la visita, le nozze e il trionfo," in *La città effimera e l'universo artificiale del giardino: La Firenze dei Medici e l'Italia del '500*, ed. Mario Fagiolo (Rome: Officina Edizioni, 1979), pp. 69–100; and Testaverde, "Spectacle, Theater, and Propaganda at the Court of the Medici," in *The Medici, Michelangelo, and the Art of Late Renaissance Florence*, exh. cat. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2002), pp. 122–31. For a more general overview of Renaissance festivals, see Bonner Mitchell, *The Majesty of the State: Triumphal Progresses of Foreign Sovereigns in Renaissance Italy, 1494–1600* (Florence: Olschki, 1986) and Roy Strong, *Art and Power: Renaissance Festivals, 1450–1650* (Woodbridge, England: Boydell Press, 1984).

the Medici rulers to impress and involve both groups. Public, grand-ducal sponsored events incorporated into the urban fabric of the city ranged from the triumphal entries of the brides to jousts and animal baiting in the city's piazzas, while locales such as the Palazzo Vecchio, the Uffizi Theater, and the Pitti Palace hosted a number of private banquets, religious ceremonies, and theatrical performances intended solely for the Medici court. The marriages of Ferdinando I de' Medici (1549–1609) to the French princess Christine of Lorraine (1565–1636) in 1589 and of their son Cosimo II (1590–1621) to Habsburg archduchess Maria Maddalena of Austria (1587/9–1631) in 1608 merited two of the most lavish weddings of the early modern period.[2] An examination of two festival forms staged for both of these celebrations, the triumphal entry and the mock naval battle or *naumachia*, illustrates how the Medici engaged their primary audiences through interactive participation, and highlights the crucial role played by these state occasions in securing grand-ducal power both at home and abroad.

The nuptials were blatant vehicles for elevating Medici status in monarchical Europe designed to cement Medici ties with the powerful courts of France and Spain.[3] With his marriage to Christine, Ferdinando sought to assert Tuscany's sovereignty from Spain and the Holy Roman Emperor, and also to forge new alliances with France, the sworn enemy of the Spanish crown.[4] Ferdinando recognized,

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[2] On the Medici grand dukes: Jacopo Riguccio Galluzzi, *Istoria del Granducato di Toscana sotto il governo della Casa Medici* (Florence: Cambiagi, 1781); Eric Cochrane, *Florence in the Forgotten Centuries: 1527–1800: A History of Florence and the Florentines in the Age of the Grand Dukes* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1973); and J.R. Hale, *Florence and the Medici: The Pattern of Control* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977). For a concise overview of Ferdinando's life and achievements, see Suzanne B. Butters, "Ferdinando de' Medici and the Art of the Possible," in *The Medici, Michelangelo and the Art of Late Renaissance Florence*, pp. 66–75.

[3] Elite marriages in the Renaissance were rarely love matches. They instead were intended to solidify strategic family alliances and to accrue financial gain. In 1565, Cosimo I (1519–1574) secured the first truly royal match for a male member of the Medici family when he brokered the marriage of Prince Regent Francesco (1541–1587), Ferdinando's elder brother, to Habsburg archduchess Giovanna of Austria (1547–1578), the youngest daughter of the Holy Roman Emperor, Ferdinand I (1503–1564).

[4] Christine was the granddaughter of Catherine de' Medici (1519–1589), queen to Henry II of France (1519–1559), and a distant cousin of Ferdinando. Catherine's brokerage of the marriage between her Medici kin and her beloved charge, who was effectively adopted by the queen after her mother's death in 1575, was to be her final diplomatic act as sovereign. Catherine died on January 5, 1589, shortly before Christine's departure for the wedding celebration in Florence. Ferdinando's policy

however, the potential danger of severing all ties to Spain, and consequentially arranged the marriage of his heir, Cosimo II, to a Habsburg princess.[5]

As James Saslow noted in his authoritative study of the 1589 celebration, Ferdinando's wedding offered him one of the first opportunities to announce his grand-ducal aims and policies to the ambassadors and courtiers of royal Europe, and to illustrate the political, military, economic, and cultural power of his Tuscan empire.[6] In addition, the nuptials simultaneously provided an opportunity for the grand duke to dazzle his Tuscan subjects as well as to garner broader public support for his regime and his policies. By encouraging the active participation of the citizenry in grand-ducal celebrations, Ferdinando no doubt inspired in his subjects a shared sense of civic pride, as well as a fervent devotion to their city and to their benevolent grand duke.

Central to the pageantry produced for these two pivotal ceremonial occasions were the Cavalieri di Santo Stefano. A chivalric knighthood founded by the Medici and comprised of Tuscan aristocrats, the Order of Santo Stefano operated as a navy devoted to the defense of the Catholic Church and the Catholic countries rimming the Mediterranean against the Islamic threat posed by the Ottoman Empire.

The prominence of imagery connected to the knights during these significant state occasions highlights the supreme importance of the chivalric brotherhood as a propagandistic tool for the Medici dynasty and the relevance of the iconography for the multiple audiences in

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towards the French court represented a complete reversal from that of Francesco, who had been closely allied with the Spanish and imperial courts during his tenure as grand duke. By wedding Christine, Ferdinando deliberately disregarded the wishes of the Habsburg rulers that he marry an imperial princess like his brother before him. The alliance between Tuscany and France was strengthened further in October 1600 when Ferdinando brokered the marriage of his niece Marie (1575–1642), Francesco's youngest daughter, to Henry IV (1553–1610), king of France.

[5] Maria Maddalena was the daughter of the Habsburg archduke Charles II of Austria (1540–1590), himself a brother to Giovanna of Austria, the wife of Francesco I de' Medici.

[6] Saslow, *Medici Wedding of 1589*, p. 1. A cardinal for almost twenty-five years (1563–1588) prior to his grand-ducal reign, Ferdinando's experience at the papal court prepared him well for his leadership of the Tuscan state, and the grand duchy soon enjoyed stability, prosperity, and international prestige unmatched by previous generations of Medici rule. Although he became grand duke in October 1587, Ferdinando did not officially renounce his cardinal's office until November 28, 1588, in preparation for his marriage to Christine the following spring.

attendance. The Cavalieri di Santo Stefano impressed upon the royal courts the piety and prestige of the Medici family as well as the intertwined destinies of the great Catholic powers, the Tuscan grand duchy now among them, in the fight against the Ottoman Turks. It was precisely the rising status of the Medici as a maritime empire, the growing power of the Tuscan navy, the development of the port at Livorno (on the Tyrrhenian Sea), and the military might of the Cavalieri, that, in part, allowed Ferdinando to broker these politically significant marriage alliances.

Just as importantly, visual references to the Order of Santo Stefano also addressed and involved the Tuscan populace at large. The sheer grandeur and magnificence of the festivities coupled with the vicarious experience of the grand duchy's ongoing crusade for the one true faith encouraged their physical, as well as mental and spiritual interaction. Ferdinando united his subjects in celebrating the absolute power and glory of the Medici regime as Christian warriors and defenders of the Church.[7]

The advertisement of the order through art was of paramount importance to the formation of Medici identity during the reign of Ferdinando, and thus it is no surprise that the imagery and iconography of the Cavalieri, as well as the knights themselves, played integral roles in the weddings of 1589 and 1608. The triumphal entry and the *naumachia*, festival forms that effectively book-ended each of these celebrations, offer the opportunity to consider not only audience interaction on both elite and popular levels, but specifically in relation to imagery tied to the Cavalieri di Santo Stefano.

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[7] The Ottoman Empire had represented a danger to the European faithful for centuries, but the Catholic Church seized on the cultural threat anew following the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Mustafa Soykut, *Image of the "Turk" in Italy: a History of the "Other" in Early Modern Europe: 1453–1683* (Berlin: Schwarz, 2001), argues that this renewed war against the infidel became a crucial ideological weapon used to divert attention from schisms in Europe and in the Church. It allowed the papacy to reassert its power and to unite the Christian community once more under the authority of Rome. Ferdinando employed a strategy similar to that of the Catholic Church in his commissions, utilizing the defense of the true faith against the Turkish infidel as a tool to unite the Tuscan populace. On the Order of Santo Stefano and the Turkish "other," see Flavia Bucciero, "L'infedele nell'immaginario dei Cavalieri" in *Le imprese e i simboli: contributi alla storia del Sacro Militare Ordine di S. Stefano P.M. (sec. XVI–XIX)* (Pisa: Giardini, 1989), pp. 259–81.

Festival Books

Renaissance festivals like the Medici weddings are known and understood today mainly through two key sources: festival books and prints. The circulation of these two art forms throughout Italy and Europe not only ensured that the glories of the grand-ducal spectacles would be witnessed by a much larger audience than had been in attendance for the actual celebrations, they also guaranteed that the ephemeral pageantry would be transformed into something lasting and permanent.[8]

Festival books, "official" printed documents most often produced by or with the blessing of a ruling prince, commemorated the spectacles associated with important court occasions such as births, marriages, and funerals. As is suggested by their epic titles, the books record the celebratory events in unsparing detail, from the appearance of the elaborate *apparati* (festival displays) erected for the triumphal entries, to the intricate plot points and allegorical meanings of the theatrical performances.[9]

The earliest festival books appeared in the mid-fifteenth century and they grew more comprehensive and more lavish over the next century, until by the 1550s printed illustrations of various *apparati* appeared alongside the descriptive text.[10] Produced in limited editions and at

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[8] The majority of decorations were dismantled following the completion of a festival, and even if a work of art survived, the crowds, the games, the parades, and the fireworks only survived in print. See James Saslow, *Medici Wedding of 1589*, p. 193, on the rare survival and reuse of six gesso sculptures from the 1589 nuptials that were later transferred to the Florentine Duomo.

[9] On the Renaissance festival book: Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, "The Early Modern Festival Book: Function and Form," in *Europa Triumphans: Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe*, eds. J.R. Mulryne, Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, and Margaret Shewring (Aldershot, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2004), vol. 1, pp. 3–17; Watanabe-O'Kelly, "Early Modern European Festivals—Politics and Performance, Event and Record," in *Court Festivals of the European Renaissance: Art, Politics and Performance*, eds. J.R. Mulryne and Elizabeth Goldring (Aldershot, England and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), pp. 15–25; Bonner Mitchell, *1598: A Year of Pageantry in Late Renaissance Ferrara* (Binghamton, NY: Center for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1980), pp. 3–11; and Henri Zerner, "Looking for the Unknowable: The Visual Experience of Renaissance Festivals," in *Europa Trimphans*, vol. 1, pp. 75–98.

[10] Bonner Mitchell, *Ferrara*, p. 3, cites the 1475 marriage celebrations of Costanzo Sforza, lord of Pesaro, and Camilla d'Aragona as the earliest occasion warranting a separately printed festival account and Roy Strong, *Art and Power*, p. 22, notes that by 1600 no major festival went unrecorded in print. The entry of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (1500–1558) into Milan in 1541 was the first printed Italian source to contain illustrations of triumphal decorations; Mitchell, *Ferrara*, p. 5. See Watanabe-

great expense, the primary audience for the books was a courtly one. Rulers disseminated the printed books with the aim of impressing both allies and rivals, and inventories of princely libraries from the period indicate that they were collected widely.[11]

Despite their authors' claims of eyewitness authority and unvarnished truth, festival books were not simple factual narrations recorded by un-interested parties. The authors most likely wrote to please a patron or to seek favor from those in authority, and the records of festival events must be understood with that mission in mind.[12] It would be folly to gauge true audience reception from these texts as nearly every event is described in hyperbolic superlatives; the crowds are always ecstatic, the decorations magnificent, and the theatrical performances stupendous.[13] Instead, the value of these documents lies in the insight they provide into how ruling dynasties viewed themselves and their power, revealing what they thought was important to advertise in terms of ruling identity, and what they wanted remembered to posterity. In the case of the books chronicling the Medici weddings,

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O'Kelly, "Early Modern Festival Book," pp. 7–9, on Charles' considerable contributions to the festival book genre.

[11] Watanabe-O'Kelly, "Early Modern Festival Book," pp. 14–15.

[12] In the dedication of his *diario* commemorating the wedding of 1589, Giuseppe Pavoni assures the reader that he has recorded only "the things I have seen with my own eyes" ("le cose da me vedute con gli propri occhi"); *Diario descritto da Giuseppe Pavoni: delle feste celebrate nelle solennissime nozze delli serenissimi sposi, il sig. don Ferdinando Medici, & la sig. donna Christina di Loreno gran duchi di Toscana: nel quale con brevità si esplica il torneo, la battaglia navale, la comedia con gli intermedii, & altre feste occorse di giorno in giorno per tutto il dì 15. di maggio, MDLXXXIX* (Bologna: Rossi, 1589), p. 4. Despite this promise, James Saslow notes that Pavoni clearly relied on other accounts of the festival to flesh out his own descriptions; *Medici Wedding of 1589*, pp. 178–9. See Watanabe-O'Kelly, "Early Modern Festival Book," pp. 6–12, on the sources of information for festival books and the reliability of authors, as well as Mitchell, *Ferrara*, p. 3, on the diplomatic reports known as *avvissi*, unofficial, handwritten documents that also included details of festivals but were intended as private and confidential for the eyes of the ambassador's master only.

[13] In the dedication to Duke Alfonso d'Este of Ferrara in his *descrizione*, Bastiano de' Rossi praises "the stupendous and incomparable beauty of the spectacle" ("la stupenda e incomparabil bellezza dello spettacolo") staged by Grand Duke Ferdinando; *Descrizione dellapparato e degl' intermedi. Fatti per la commedia rappresentata in Firenze. Nelle nozze de' serenissimi Don Ferdinando Medici, e Madama Cristina de Loreno, gran duchi di Toscana* (Florence: Padovani, 1589), p. i. Bonner Mitchell, *Ferrara*, pp. 9–10, warns, however, of adopting an overly skeptical response to the sincerity of the crowd's reactions. Royal entries were rare and the populace would have been awed by the extravagant decorations as well as quite curious to see the grand personages.

they clearly communicate the political and cultural aspirations of the Florentine court.[14]

The primary festival books for the Medici weddings of 1589 and 1608 were produced by Raffaello Gualterotti (1543–1648) and Camillo Rinuccini (1564–1649) respectively, both veterans of past Medici court productions.[15] Gualterotti's two volume text was the first Medici nuptial account to include extensive visual documentation alongside a description of the celebration.[16] The second volume, dedicated to "La Serenissima Gran Duchessa" Christine of Lorraine and dated May 1, 1589, is illustrated with sixty-five plates depicting the entry *apparati*. The plates reproduce the appearance of each decorative ensemble as a whole with separate images for details of paintings and sculptures. (figs. 13.1–13.2) In addition, Gualterotti's text includes descriptive explanations of the imagery as well as the Latin inscriptions that accompanied and identified the narrative scenes. The book appears to have been printed prior to the triumphal entry in order to allow the bride to carry a copy with her on her journey through the city.[17]

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[14] Cesare Molinari, "Delle nozze medicee e dei loro cronisti," in *Il teatro dei Medici*, ed. Maria Ines Aliverti (Florence: Vallecchi, 1980), pp. 23–30.

[15] Raffaello Gualterotti, *Descrizione del regale apparato per le nozze della Serenissima Madama Cristina di Lorena, moglie del Serenissimo Don Fernando Medici, III Gran Duca di Toscana*, 2 vols. (Florence: Padovani, 1589) and Camillo Rinuccini, *Descrizione delle feste fatte nelle reali nozze de' serenissimi principi di Toscana D. Cosimo de' Medici e Maria Maddalena Arciduchessa d'Austria* (Florence: Giunti, 1608). In addition, numerous other texts written in Italian, Latin, and French and printed in Florence, Siena, Rome, Ferrara, Bologna, Venice, and Lyon were published to commemorate the celebrations. A sense of the depth and breadth of festival literature produced during the early modern period is offered by Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly and Anne Simon's *Festival and Ceremonies: A Bibliography of Works Relating to Court, Civic and Religious Festivals in Europe 1500–1800* (London and New York: Mansell, 2000). They catalogue fourteen books pertaining to the festivities of 1589 and eighteen for 1608, including various editions; for ex., five editions of Rinuccini would be published; Blumenthal, *Theater Art*, p. 37. See also *Feste e apparati medicei*, pp. 205–206, 214–17; and Angelo Solerti, *Musica, Ballo e Drammatica alla Corte Medicea dal 1600 al 1637: notizie tratte da un diario; con appendice di testi inediti e rari* (Florence: Bemporad, 1905), pp. 12–18, 40–57.

[16] Testaverde, "Spectacle, Theater and Propaganda," pp. 125–26.

[17] Saslow, *Medici Wedding of 1589*, p. 140; see pp. 23–25 on Gualterotti in general. The first volume, dedicated to Ferdinando and dated June 4, contains no images and is in Saslow's words, less a guidebook, like the second volume, and more a narrative description of the procession as it moved through Florence, including accounts of the ceremonies performed at each arch. It is likely that Gualterotti's text was printed in time for guests to take a copy with them as they left Florence. Bastiano's chronicle of the comedy and *intermedi* performances staged on May 2 was released on May 14, prior to the departure of the wedding guests; Saslow, p. 179.

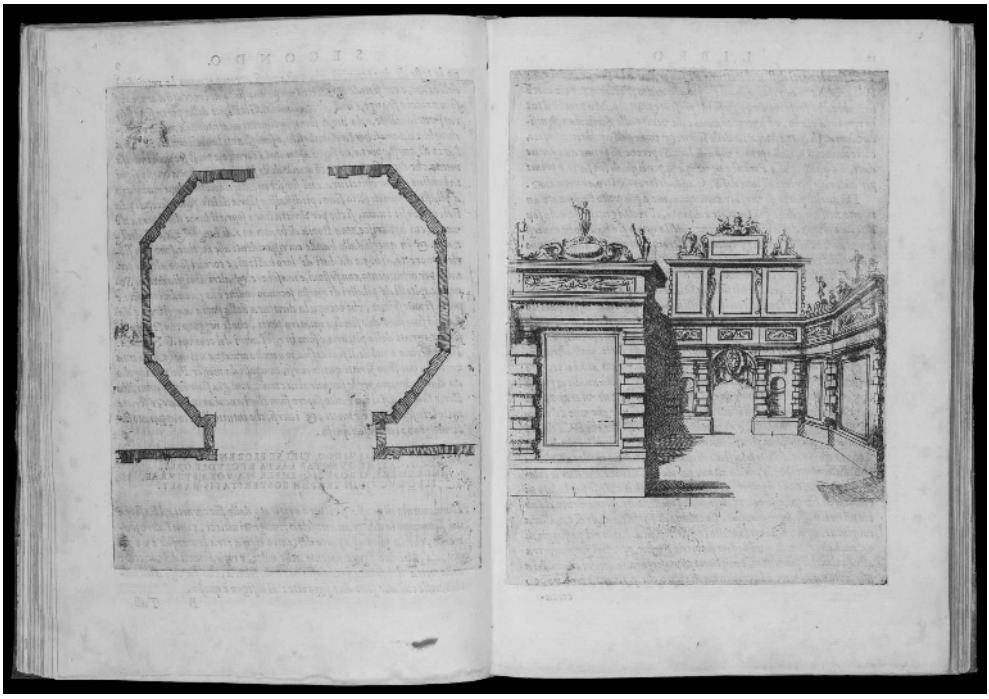

Fig. 13.1 Raffaello Gualterotti, Decoration for the Porta al Prato (including aerial view) for the entry of Christine of Lorraine from *Descrizione del regale apparato per le nozze della Serenissima Madama Cristina di Loreno, moglie del Serenissimo Don Ferdinando Medici, III. Gran Duca di Toscana*, pp. 9–10, pl. 1–2 (1589), engraving. Photo: courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

Rinuccini's *Descrizione* is not as thoroughly illustrated as Gualterotti's text, containing just five engravings by Matthias Greuter (*c.* 1564/5–1638) of the most spectacular events of the wedding.

Ferdinando's wedding ceremonies exerted considerable cultural influence in seventeenth-century Europe, a phenomenon James Saslow credited to the wide distribution of Gualterotti's illustrated festival book.[18] In addition, independent engravings and etchings depicting the pageantry circulated throughout Europe. Thirty-two prints from 1589, the majority completed by Orazio Scarabelli (act. 1580–1600), remain

[18] An authoritative account of the commemorative books and prints produced for the 1589 wedding, including their widespread and long-lasting influence, is provided by Saslow, *Medici Wedding of 1589*, pp. 178–88.

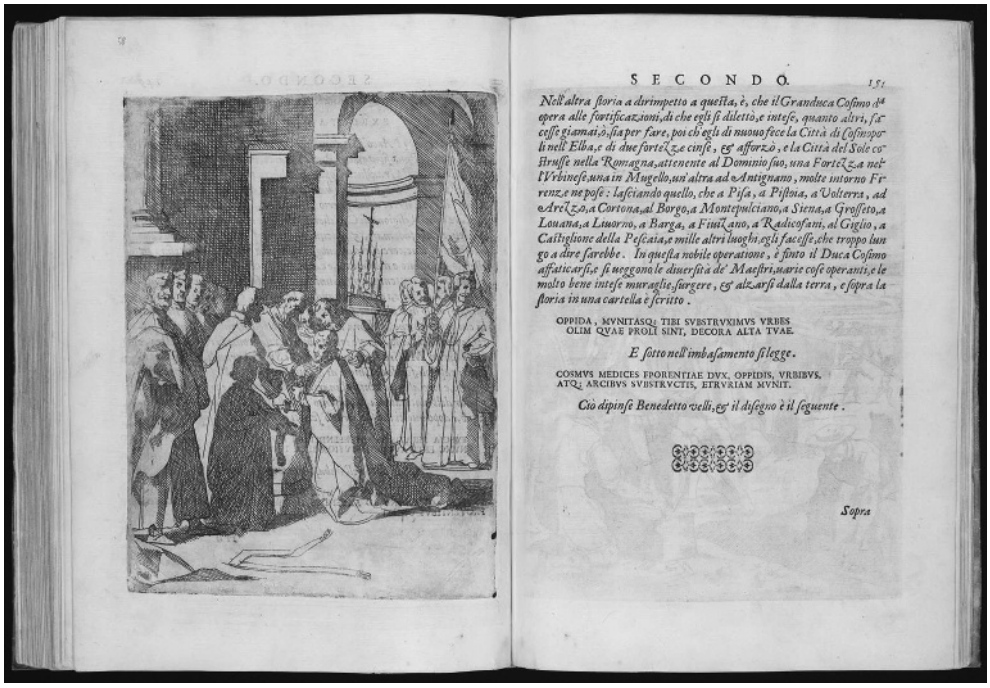
SECONDO. 151
Nell'altra storia a dirimpetto a questa, è, che il Granduca Cosimo 1.
opera alle fortificazioni, di che egli si dilettò, e intese, quanto altri, fa-
cesse giamai, ò, sia per fare, poi ch'egli di nuouo fece la Città di Cosimopo-
li nell'Elba, e di due fortezze cinse, & afforzò, e la Città del Sole co-
strusse nella Romagna, attenente al Dominio suo, una Fortezza nel-
l'Vrbinese, una in Mugello, un'altra ad Antignano, molte intorno Fi-
renze, e ne pose: lasciando quello, che a Pisa, a Pistoia, a Volterra, ad
Arezzo, a Cortona, al Borgo, a Montepulciano, a Siena, a Grosseto, a
Louana, a Liuorno, a Barga, a Fiuizzano, a Radicofani, al Giglio, a
Castiglione della Pescaia, e mille altri luoghi, egli facesse, che troppo lun
go a dire sarebbe. In questa nobile operatione, è finto il Duca Cosimo
affaticarsi, e si veggono le diuersità de' Maestri, varie cose operanti, e le
molto bene intese muraglie, surgere, & alzarsi dalla terra, e sopra la
storia in una cartella è scritto.
OPPIDA, MVNITASQ; TIBI SVBSTRVXIMVS VRBES
OLIM QVAE PROLI SINT, DECORA ALTA TVAE.
E sotto nell'imbasamento si legge.
COSMVS MEDICES FLORENTIAE DVX, OPPIDIS, VRBIBVS,
ATQ; ARCIBVS SVBSTRVCTIS, ETRVRIAM MVNIT.
Ciò dipinse Benedetto Uelli, & il disegno è il seguente.
Sopra

Fig. 13.2 Raffaello Gualterotti, *Scene of Pope Pius IV Approving the Foundation of the Order of Santo Stefano*, decoration for the Canto degli Antellesi for the entry of Christine of Lorraine from *Descrizione del regale apparato per le nozze della Serenissima Madama Cristina di Loreno, moglie del Serenissimo Don Ferdinando Medici, III. Gran Duca di Toscana*, pp. 150–151, pl. 58 (1589), engraving. Photo: courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

extant.[19] (fig. 13.3) The 1608 *apparato* was also one of the most visually well documented of any Medici union, and the numerous prints and drawings depicting the festivities had a significant impact on the history of festival and theater design throughout Europe. This occasion marked the first time a theatrical designer, Giulio Parigi (1571–1635),

[19] Both the genealogy and the commissioners of the various prints remains unclear. Series of prints continued to be issued for several years following the conclusion of the ceremonies; *Ibid.*, pp. 180–81. In "Uno spettacolo a Pitti nel 1589," in *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Ugo Procacci*, eds. Maria Dal Poggetto, Paolo Dal Poggetto (Milan: Electa, 1977), vol. 2, pp. 476–85, Anna Petrioli Tofani proposed that a series produced by Scarabelli in 1592 was most likely commissioned by Christine to send to the French court. Saslow and Blumenthal (in *Theater Art*) reproduce a majority of these prints with accompanying explanatory text on each. See also *Feste e apparati medicei*, pp. 75–85, on the images.

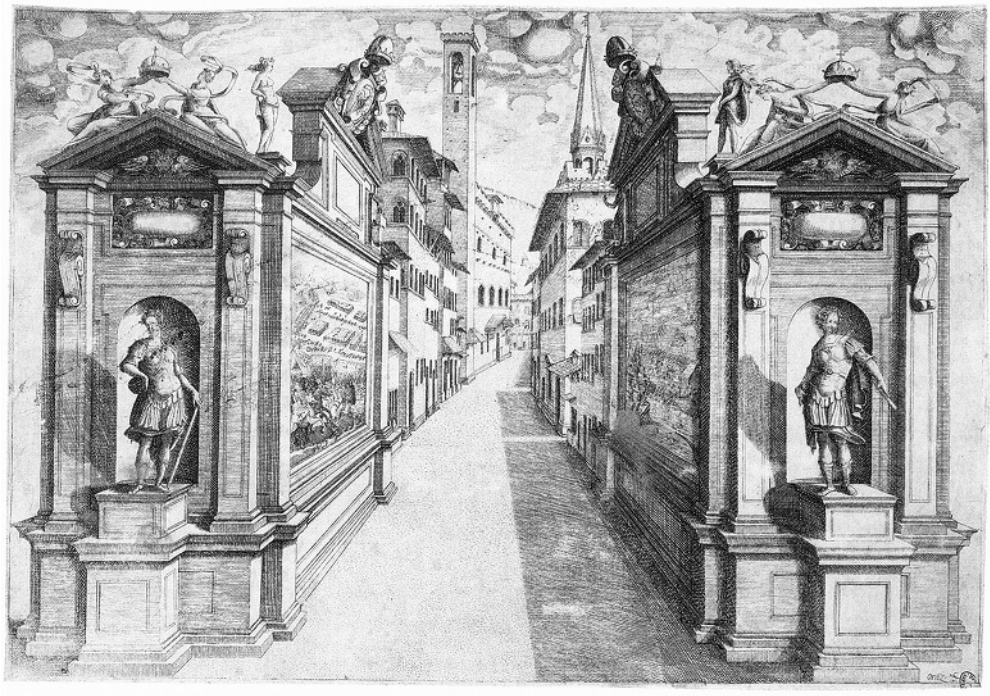

Fig. 13.3 Orazio Scarabelli (after Taddeo Landini), *Decoration for the Canto dei Bischeri for the entry of Christine of Lorraine* (1592), etching (23.5 × 24.5 cm). Florence, Italy, Biblioteca Marucelliana. Photo: after *The Medici, Michelangelo, and the Art of Late Renaissance Florence*, exh. cat. (2002) p. 361.

completed a series of etchings from his own designs, thus ensuring their wide dissemination and influence.[20] Like the festival books themselves, the prints must be viewed with a critical eye as the printmakers invented or embellished certain details and eliminated others entirely.[21] Nonetheless they are valuable visual sources for both the triumphal entries and the *naumachias*.

[20] Blumenthal, *Theater Art*, pp. 30–1. The influence of Parigi's designs was felt both at home and abroad, specifically in the work of Jacques Callot, court artist to Cosimo II, and also of Inigo Jones at the Stuart court in England under Kings James I and Charles I. See Blumenthal, *Theater Art*, pp. 32–86 and *Feste e apparati medicei*, pp. 102, 105–27.

[21] Saslow, *Medici Wedding of 1589*, pp. 180–181.

The Entry Into Florence

Both wedding celebrations commenced with the triumphal entry of the bride into Florence: Christine on April 30, 1589 (Palm Sunday) and Maria Maddalena on October 18, 1608.[22] The grand scope and lavish appearance of these entry processions was calculated to overwhelm the thousands of onlookers who choked the streets, bridges, windows, and rooftops of Florence, hoping to catch a glimpse of their new grand duchess.[23] In 1589, Christine's entourage stretched a mile-long and included members of the ducal family, clerics, ambassadors, nobles, knights, and ladies-in-waiting, as well as musicians and singers, who performed at various points during the entry.[24] The processions, one of the most public—and popular—aspects of the grand-ducal weddings had their roots in three distinct traditions: the medieval royal entry, the classical Roman triumph, and local festivals.[25]

The medieval royal entry developed in Northern Europe and was embraced emphatically in France where tradition dictated that the newly appointed king "take possession" of the principal cities of his dominion. *Tableaux vivants*, or street pageants, involving actors por-

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[22] The entries were the culmination of a months-long journey from the brides' home countries; Christine departed Blois in late February, Maria left Graz in mid-September. Prior to their departures each bride participated in a wedding by proxy. The brides then were escorted to Florence in ships manned by knights of the Order of Santo Stefano. Don Pietro de' Medici, Ferdinando's brother and one of his chief military commanders, chaperoned Christina, and Ferdinando's nephew, Don Antonio de' Medici, accompanied Maria Maddalena. On the journeys to Florence: Gualterotti, *Descrizione del regale apparato*, vol. 2, pp. 4–19; and Rinuccini, *Descrizione delle feste*, pp. 1–3. Saslow's discussion of Christine's journey from Blois to Florence offers a thorough account of this ritual as well; *Medici Wedding of 1589*, pp. 99–100, 117–38.

[23] Saslow describes the city rising at dawn and crowds from "as far off as Genoa, Rome, Naples, and France" lining the streets for Christine's entry; *Medici Wedding of 1589*, p. 138.

[24] On Christine's entry: Saslow, *Medici Wedding of 1589*, pp. 138–47; and Strong, *Art and Power*, pp. 131–33. On Maria Maddalena's: Blumenthal, *Theater Art,* p. 35; and *Feste e apparati medicei,* pp. 105–107.

[25] On the Renaissance triumphal entry: Mitchell, *Majesty*, pp. 1–17; Strong, *Art and Power*, pp. 44–50; Mitchell, *Italian Civic Pageantry in the High Renaissance: A Descriptive Bibliography of Triumphal Entries* (Florence: Olschki, 1979); and Robert Baldwin, "A Bibliography of the Literature on Triumph," in "*All the world's a stage*…": *Art and Pageantry in the Renaissance and Baroque*, ed. Barbara Wisch and Susan Scott Munshower (University Park, PA: Department of Art History, Pennsylvania State University, 1990), pp. 358–85. On Florentine entries specifically: Annamaria Petrioli Tofani, "Gli ingressi trionfali," in *Il potere e lo spazio: la scena del principe*, ed. Franco Borsi (Milan: Electa, 1980), pp. 343–46.

traying biblical, mythological, or allegorical scenes were an important part of the royal entry in the fourteenth century, appearing along the processional route. A crucial element of the entry was the interaction between the ruler and his subjects, with the citizenry fully participating in the execution and staging of the pageantry.[26]

According to Roy Strong, the royal entry underwent a significant transformation in Italy during the Renaissance, a change that was not solely physical in nature, but also ideological.[27] By the close of the fifteenth century, the entry was no longer a dialogue between a prince and his subjects, and had become instead an absolutist spectacle imitating the triumphs of ancient Rome. Entry programs were sponsored and organized almost solely by the ruling dynasty and the role of the populace was simply to gasp in awe and wonder at the magnificent pageantry.[28]

Ancient Roman triumphs originated as grand public processions designed to honor victorious generals. The celebrated hero rode through the streets of Rome atop a triumphal chariot, often piled high with spoils captured in battle, including captives in chains. The ritual slowly died out with the fall of the Western Empire and it was not until the fifteenth century that a large-scale humanist revival of this particular form was attempted. Influenced by the descriptions of triumphs in classical texts as well as by the writings of their contemporaries, most notably Petrarch, Renaissance rulers celebrated military victories, state visits, and the arrival of courtly brides with triumphal parades, a potent reminder that they were heirs to the glories of Rome.[29]

The entries of the Medici brides also owed a significant debt to the vibrant tradition of public civic festivals in Florence. The most

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[26] Mitchell, *Majesty*, pp. 8–10; and Strong, *Art and Power*, pp. 7–11. Elements of the French royal entry tradition became known to Italian audiences through the triumphal entries of three successive French kings into Italy, King Charles VIII in 1494–5, King Louis XII in 1499, 1502, 1507, and 1509, and King Francis I in 1515. Prior to Charles' visit in 1494, Italy had witnessed few ceremonial entries.

[27] Strong, *Art and Power*, p. 42.

[28] Mitchell, *Majesty*, pp. 7–8; and Strong, *Art and Power*, pp. 44–46. A driving force in this transformation was the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V who staged numerous entries over the course of his four decades of rule; see Strong, pp. 75–97, on the entries of Charles V.

[29] Strong, *Art and Power*, pp. 44–50; A series of allegorical poems known as the *Trionfi* produced by the celebrated fourteenth-century writer featured a procession commemorating six triumphs: love, chastity, fame, death, time, and eternity. Following the publication of illustrated versions of Petrarch's poem in the fifteenth-century, the theme of the triumphal cart bearing an allegorical or mythological figure became a very popular subject for Renaissance artists.

important feast day of the Florentine calendar was June 24, honoring St. John the Baptist, the city's patron saint. The attendant celebrations were among the most longstanding and elaborate in the city's history and they invited significant participation from the Florentine populace. Events were sponsored by various civic groups ranging from guilds to aristocratic families to neighborhood associations. They included a grand procession of members of the clergy, monastic orders, and lay confraternities through the city, performances of *sacre rappresentazioni* under the city's loggias, and more raucous competitions, such as jousts, horse racing, and animal baiting. Grandstands erected throughout the city allowed the public to view the various spectacles, including the parade of inventively decorated floats (*edifizi*) and triumphal carts (*trionfi*) that according to Richard Trexler made the Feast of San Giovanni world-famous and "delighted inhabitant and foreigner alike."[30]

Beginning in the fifteenth century, the Feast of San Giovanni, along with numerous other civic celebrations and customs, was co-opted by the Medici. Florentines were conditioned to view their urban landscape as a theatrical space and these public, communal pageants provided the basis for the triumphal entries and elaborate *apparati* staged by the Medici, as well as for the religious rituals, games, and theatrical events associated with later grand-ducal celebrations.[31] A number of elaborate entries involving the Medici were staged in Florence in the first half of the sixteenth century, including one for Pope Leo X (Giovanni de' Medici, r. 1513–21) in 1515 and a second one for Ferdinando's mother, Eleonora di Toledo (1519–1562), in 1539.[32] Yet,

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[30] Richard Trexler, *Public Life in Renaissance Florence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1980), p. 252. In Ch. 8: "The Ritual of Celebration," pp. 215–78 (pp. 240–78 on the Feast of San Giovanni specifically), Trexler discusses the long civic tradition of public festivities (processions, feasts, jousts, etc.) during what he terms the "classical period of the Florentine *feste*": 1343 to 1480. An invaluable source on the civic spectacles of Quattrocento Florence is Mark Christopher Rogers, *Art and Public Festival in Renaissance Florence, Studies in Relationships* (PhD diss., University of Texas Austin, 1996), esp. pp. 194–279, on the Feast of San Giovanni. See also Sharon Strocchia, "Theaters of Everyday Life," in *Renaissance Florence: A Social History*, eds. Roger T. Crum and John Paoletti (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 55–80, 492–97, for an overview of the theatrical use and the nature and theatrical use of urban space in Renaissance Florence.

[31] Testaverde, "Spectacle, Theater, and Propaganda," p. 123; and Rogers, *Art and Public Festival in Renaissance Florence*, p. 276.

[32] In addition to his familiarity with Florentine pageantry, during his years as a cardinal in Rome Ferdinando witnessed the elaborate festivities staged by the papal court, including the *possesso* (ceremonial possession) of three popes: Pius V (1566–1572),

the 1565 entry of Giovanna of Austria, on the occasion of her marriage to Francesco de' Medici, set a new bar for festival achievement by the Medici family that would influence greatly the level of magnificence and grandeur attempted by the grand dukes in the years following.[33]

For their entries, Christine and Maria Maddalena were greeted by an iconographically complex series of temporary arches erected along the processional route.[34] Over the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the triumphal arch became the principal decorative element of the royal entry. The first Florentine entry to feature this particular *apparato* was that of the French king, Charles VIII (1470–1498), in 1494.[35] By the weddings of 1589 and 1608, the one arch erected for Charles had been transformed into a series of elaborately decorated arches and temporary building façades. Constructed from wood and plaster, they were decorated with multiple narrative and allegorical oil paintings on canvas as well as stucco sculptures and decorations.[36]

Gregory XIII (1572–1585), and Sixtus V (1585–1590). In December 1571, Ferdinando also experienced the grandiose entry held in Rome for Marcantonio Colonna, commander of the Catholic fleet, following his rout of the Turks at Lepanto; Mitchell, *Majesty*, pp. 13, 15–16; and Jenny Jordan, "Galley Warfare in Renaissance Intellectual Layering: Lepanto through Actium," *Viator* 35 (2004), pp. 568–69.

[33] In preparing the program, Vincenzo Borghini, Cosimo's chief *festaiuolo* or festival planner, consulted the records of over forty triumphal events held between 1512 and 1561. Many of the entries—of popes, kings, emperors, and brides—were tied to the Habsburgs or involved the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V in some capacity. That these spectacles became models for the Medici clearly illustrated the family's belief that by fashioning an identity based on the powerful imperial dynasty they too would accrue legitimacy and prestige; Randolph Starn and Loren Partridge, *Arts of Power, Three Halls of State in Italy, 1300–1600* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), pp. 193–94. Starn and Partridge provide the authoritative account of the 1565 triumphal entry and its related decorative elements.

[34] The preparations for these entries began months in advance and involved a small army of artists, sculptors, architects, and various craftsmen. Some of key figures included Niccolò Gaddi who oversaw the entry program of 1589 (assisted by Pietro Angelio da Barga who wrote the Latin inscriptions that identified the themes and scenes of each arch), and Count Giovanni Bardi da Vernio and Ludovico Cardi da Cigoli who collaborated as the creator and artistic designer respectively of the entry program in 1608. Saslow, *Medici Wedding of 1589*, is a particularly rich source for the "behind the scenes" activities involved in pulling off a wedding spectacular.

[35] Strong, *Art and Power*, p. 44; and Rogers, *Art and Public Festival in Renaissance Florence*, p. 109. The entry involved festival floats as well as one triumphal arch.

[36] For Christine's entry, triumphal arches were constructed at five locations: Porta al Prato, Ponte alla Carraia (backed up against the façade of the Palazzo Ricasoli), Canto dei Carnesechi, Canto de' Bischeri, and Canto degli Antellesi. The Duomo and Palazzo Vecchio also received temporary decorative façades. For Maria Maddalena's entry, arches were erected at six locations: Porta al Prato, Borgo Ognissanti, Canto dei Nelli, Canto all Paglia, Via Maggio, and Piazza Pitti. Once again the Duomo was covered with a temporary façade. For both ceremonies stucco sculptures were erected

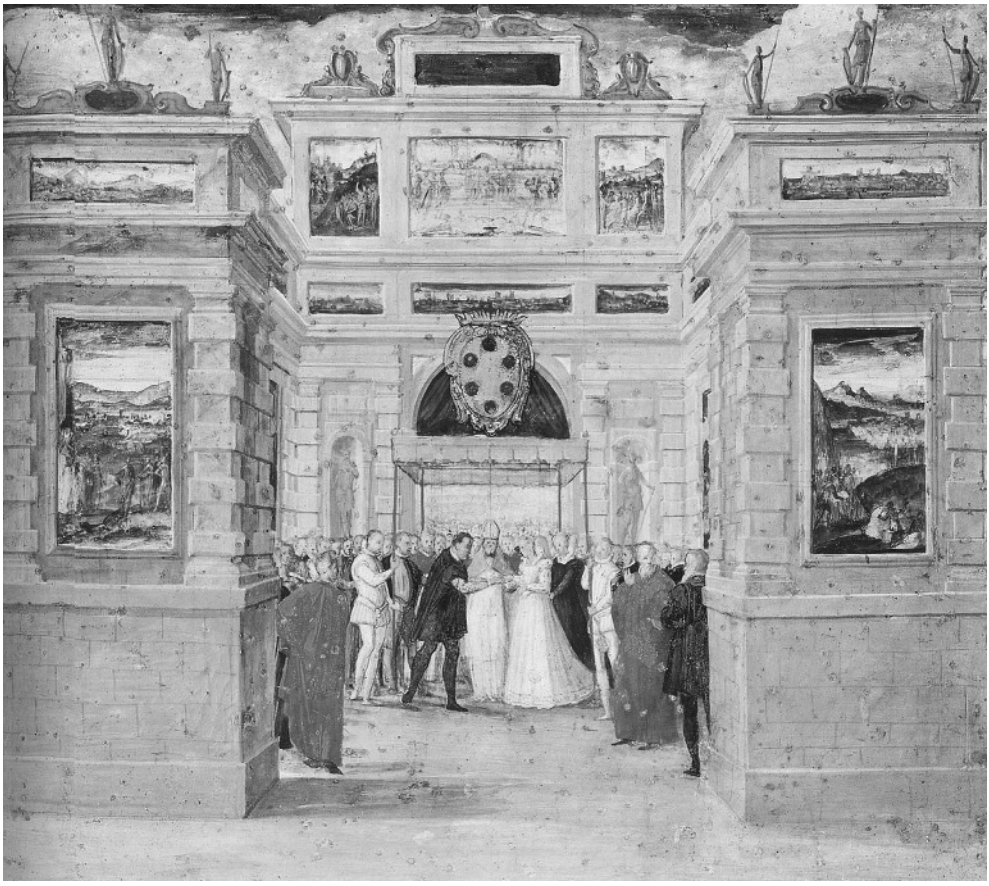

Fig. 13.4 Ventura Salimbeni, detail of *The Marriage of Ferdinando I and Christine of Lorraine* (1589), oil on panel (75 × 65 cm). Siena, Italy, Archivio di Stato. Photo: after Gene Brucker, *Florence: The Golden Age, 1138-1737* (1998) p. 152.

(fig. 13.4) The two-story arches were large enough to allow the horses and carriages of the bridal processions to pass through and their size also allowed the citizens who crowded the streets to get a good look at the decorations.[37] Although noble and patrician viewers may have grasped the majority of the iconography, it is unlikely that the

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on Ponte Santa Trinità. See *La città effimera*, figs. 110, 114, for images of the entry routes and the locations of the decorative ensembles.

[37] Saslow, *Medici Wedding of 1589*, p. 139. For example, in 1589 the Porta al Prato arch was 70 feet high at its central apex; Saslow, p. 189.

general public would have understood the complexity of the arches.[38] Nonetheless, they would have been impressed by the sheer size and grandeur of the arches, a testament to the glory of their city and their magnanimous ruler, Ferdinando.

Both entries commenced outside the western city gate, the Porta al Prato, site of the first arch where the brides were crowned by Ferdinando and the Bishop of Fiesole respectively.[39] Matthias Greuter's print of Maria Maddalena's triumphal procession, completed to illustrate Rinuccini's festival book, is the first image to show a Medici entry in diagrammatic form and allows the viewer to visualize the processional program itself as well as gives a sense of scale for both the arches and the number of participants.[40] (fig. 13.5)

Each arch lining the processional route for these two lavish wedding celebrations was designed to proclaim visually Medici power and achievement. A salient theme running through the iconography of the *apparati* for both entries was that of religious crusade. Following Ferdinando's ascension to the throne of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany in 1587, the Medici ruler developed a strong interest in promoting crusading zeal and knightly identity, especially through the Cavalieri di Santo Stefano. During his reign Ferdinando capitalized on the Medici family's status as Christian warriors by enthusiastically exploiting the iconographic possibilities of their chivalric brotherhood in monuments ranging from colossal public portrait statues to elaborate fresco cycles decorating the interiors of both public and private buildings.[41]

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[38] *Ibid.*, pp. 142–43, on audience response. Henri Zerner also stresses the importance of the visual records of festivals (over the printed books) for attempting to reconstruct what the "common man" may have understood of these entries; "Looking for the Unknowable," p. 95.

[39] While Christine's route closely mirrored that taken by Giovanna of Austria in 1565, Maria Maddalena's arrival in Florence deviated somewhat from the prior two entries. The wedding of 1608 was the first set of Medici nuptials to have the procession terminate at the Pitti Palace instead of at the Palazzo Vecchio, clearly illustrating how the sites of power had shifted in grand-ducal Florence. For a discussion of the processional routes: Marcello Fagiolo, "Effimero e giardino: Il teatro della città e il teatro della natura," in *Il potere e lo spazio*, ed. Borsi, pp. 31–54.

[40] The print's inscriptions record both the names of the entry participants and the locations of the arches; see *Feste e apparati medicei*, pp. 105–107; and Blumenthal, *Theater Art*, pp. 33–35.

[41] By 1608, Ferdinando had begun employing Cavalieri imagery in permanent decorations in Florence. Most prominently, a fresco cycle heralding the victories of the order was completed for the Sala di Bona at the Pitti Palace just in time to greet visitors to Florence for the wedding. On these frescoes, see Stefania Vasetti, "I fasti granducali della Sala di Bona: sintesi politica e culturale del principato di Ferdinando I,"

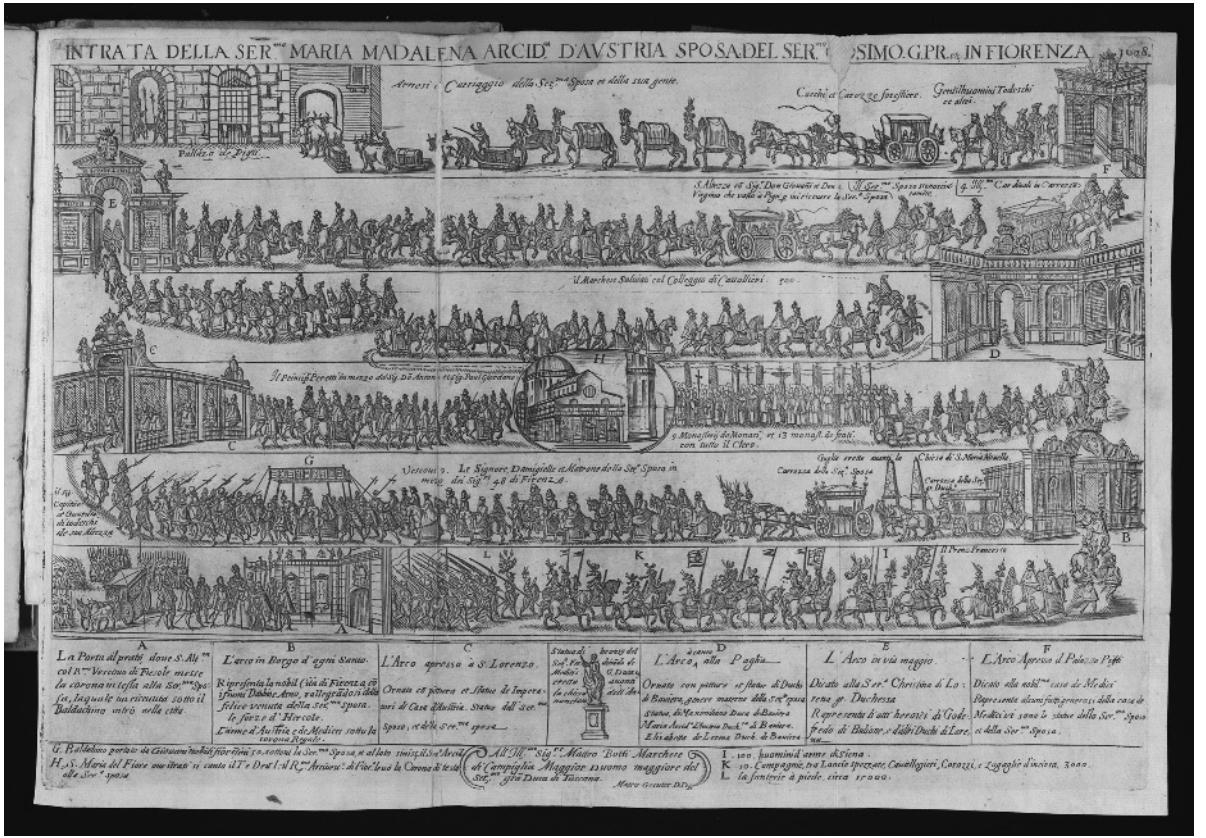

Fig. 13.5 Matthias Greuter, *The Triumphal Entry of Maria Maddalena into Florence* (1608), etching. Photo: courtesy of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

In 1562, Pope Pius IV (r. 1559–1565) granted Ferdinando's father, Cosimo I, the right to establish the Order of Santo Stefano.[42] Modeled after two of the most celebrated chivalric brotherhoods, the Order of St. John of Jerusalem (more popularly known as the Knights of Malta) and the Habsburg-controlled Order of the Golden Fleece, the Order of Santo Stefano patrolled the seas, conquering Ottoman strongholds, capturing and looting enemy vessels, rescuing Christian prisoners, and enthusiastically participating in the Mediterranean slave trade.[43]

As a chivalric organization open solely to the aristocracy, the order had built-in cachet due to its similarity to the afore-mentioned knighthoods. Its foundation, a privilege previously reserved only for royalty, was a crucial development in the Medici bid to become a maritime power on equal footing with the greatest courts in Europe. The

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in *Palazzo Pitti: la reggia rivelata*, ed. Gabriella Capecchi (Florence: Giunti, 2003), pp. 228–39.

[42] On the surface, the choice of St. Stephen (d. 257) as the patron saint of the order appears unusual since the martyred pope was a relatively minor saint (not to be confused with the more well known St. Stephen, the first martyr). Cosimo's decision was owed to the saint's fortuitous feast day, August 2, a date that coincided with the two crucial military triumphs of his reign, Montemurlo (1537) and Marciano (1554). The first solidified Cosimo's position as ruler of Florence while the second led to the conquest of Siena, a longtime Tuscan rival, and the establishment of the grand duchy. The early August feast day also coincided with the most noteworthy triumph of the great Roman Emperor Augustus, the defeat of Marc Antony at Actium. Cosimo's natal horoscope was strikingly similar to that of Augustus, an exalted astrological destiny that the duke had exploited since his rise to power in 1537. By choosing St. Stephen as the patron saint of the Cavalieri di Santo Stefano, Cosimo permanently linked the order with his Augustan destiny, implying that its foundation was, like his military victories, divinely sanctioned. The key sources for Cosimo's use of his auspicious natal horoscope in his creation of personal imagery and propaganda are: Janet Cox-Rearick, *Dynasty and Destiny: Pontormo, Leo X, and the Two Cosimos* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984) and Claudia Rousseau, *Cosimo I de' Medici and Astrology: Symbolism and Prophecy* (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1983).

[43] On the Order of Santo Stefano: Gino Guarnieri, *I cavalieri di Santo Stefano nella storia della marina italiana (1562–1859)* (Pisa: Nistri-Lischi, 1960); Cesare Ciano, *Santo Stefano per mare e per terra: la guerra mediterranea e l'ordine dei cavalieri di Santo Stefano dal 1563 al 1716* (Pisa: ETS, 1985); Franco Angiolini, "L'ordine di Santo Stefano: una storia plurisecolare," in *Pisa dei Cavalieri*, ed. Clara Baracchini (Milan: Franco Maria Ricci, 1997), pp. 7–19; Rodolfo Bernardini, *Breve storia del Sacro Militare Ordine di S. Stefano Papa e Martire dalla fondazione a oggi e dell'istituzione dei Cavalieri di S. Stefano* (Pisa: ETS, 1995); Bernardini, "Appendice: i cavalieri di Santo Stefano," in *Pisa nei secoli: la storia, l'arte, le tradizioni*, ed. Alberto Zampieri (Pisa: ETS, 2002), pp. 122–33; and Bernardini, *L'istituzione dei Cavalieri di Santo Stefano: origine, sviluppo, attività* (Pisa: ETS, 2005). In addition, Fulvio Fontana provides one of the earliest and most comprehensive sources concerning the exploits of the order, written during the reign of Cosimo III (1642–1723) and dedicated to the Medici grand duke; *I pregi della Toscana nell'imprese più segnalate de' cavalieri di Santo Stefano* (Florence: Miccioni & Nestenus, 1701).

struggle against Islam was a defining feature of the sixteenth-century Christian world. The Order of Santo Stefano positioned the Medici as warriors for the true faith, gaining papal approval and prestige abroad, specifically with prominent Catholic powers like Spain and France. In addition, Cosimo's creation of the order united the most influential families of Tuscany in a common mission. The shared membership effectively eliminated rivalries and self-interests, halted fighting among the aristocratic families, and even more importantly, softened any challenges to Medici power.[44]

Cosimo did not fully exploit his creation of the Cavalieri in his artistic patronage, preferring to assert visually his membership in the Order of the Golden Fleece.[45] Ferdinando, however, crafted the Order of Santo Stefano's defense of Catholicism against the Islamic threat into a crucial element of grand-ducal ruling identity and a key marker of Medici power and prestige. Imagery of the Cavalieri on the triumphal entry arches for the weddings of 1589 and 1608 ranged from Cosimo's foundation of the order to the most glorious and decisive victories achieved by the Medici knights over the Ottoman Empire; these included the conquests of Prevesa, Bona, and the crucial—and shared—victory of the Catholic forces of Europe over the Muslim threat at Lepanto.[46]

By 1608 the Cavalieri had grown substantially more successful and imagery connected to the order logically played a larger role in the triumphal entry decorations than it had in 1589.[47] The final two arches

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[44] Angiolini, "L'ordine di Santo Stefano," p. 7; Hale, *Florence and the Medici*, p. 154.

[45] The Habsburg-controlled organization boasted a membership that included the most prominent men in Europe, from emperors to kings. Cosimo received the Order of the Golden Fleece on July 29, 1545, and the insignia of the ram quickly became a favored emblem.

[46] In 1571 Pope Pius V rallied the Christian navies of Europe to form the Holy League, an alliance that was soon tested at the battle of Lepanto. The pope invited Cosimo and his knights to join the league, a valuable boost to the international reputation of the scarcely ten year-old order. Lepanto positioned the Medici fleet as an integral part of the Spanish-led Catholic coalition, united in the epic struggle against their common enemy, the Ottoman infidel. The victory of the forces of Christendom at Lepanto would remain a salient reminder of the unity—and by extension the intertwined destinies—of the courts of Catholic Europe in the struggle against the Ottoman Empire. Roger Crowley, *Empires of the Sea: The Siege of Malta, the Battle of Lepanto, and the Contest for the Center of the World* (New York: Random House, 2008) offers an overview of the religious conflict as well as detailed accounts of two of the most climactic naval encounters.

[47] The Cavalieri di Santo Stefano also participated in various religious ceremonies that took place during both nuptials. In 1608, the Cavalieri played an especially large role in the marriage celebration. Because of the wedding, the tri-annual meeting

of Maria Maddalena's entry procession, situated adjacent to the Pitti Palace, displayed dynastically themed decorations that celebrated the houses of Medici and of Lorraine, the paternal and maternal bloodlines from which the groom, Cosimo II, was descended.[48] The Medici arch featured narratives that illustrated the breadth of the family's land empire and scenes of their prestigious diplomatic alliances with other royal courts. Tellingly, the majority of the histories depicted were dedicated to the maritime power of the Medici, most prominently six of the greatest victories of the Cavalieri di Santo Stefano: Bona, Prevesa, Chios, Laiazzo, Namur, and Finica. It was under Ferdinando's guidance as grand master that the Cavalieri had achieved these decisive victories, accruing fame for the order—and the Medici grand-duke—throughout Europe.[49]

The entry program thus climaxed with an emphatic spotlight on knightly achievement and crusading identity. The prominent use of imagery connected to the Order of Santo Stefano in the entries and its subsequent dissemination via the festival books testifies to its effectiveness as grand-ducal propaganda and its ability to unite both the Christian rulers of Europe and the Tuscan populace behind a common cause and against a common enemy.

The Naumachias

The triumphal entries were only the beginning of weeks-long itineraries of celebratory events designed to attract and impress both elite and popular audiences during the wedding festivities. Entertainments held in public, urban spaces ranged from a joust on the Ponte Santa Trinità

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attended by the entire membership of the Cavalieri was moved from the order's church in Pisa to the Medici parish church of San Lorenzo in Florence. On October 24, six days after Maria Maddalena's entry, Ferdinando and over 300 knights, all dressed in their ceremonial habits, gathered at the Medici Palace on Via Larga (now Cavour) to march in procession to mass at San Lorenzo; see Rinuccini, *Descrizione delle feste*, pp. 32–33.

[48] On these two arches: Rinuccini, *Descrizione delle feste*, pp. 15–21; and *Feste e apparati medicei*, p. 107.

[49] Bernardini, *Breve storia*, p. 54. Hoping to eliminate the Turkish threat once and for all, Ferdinando organized military operations of greater size and in locations that were particularly strategic to the Ottoman Empire, most prominently the two fortified cities of Prevesa and Bona, which became the sites of the two greatest land assaults in the order's history. These confrontations provided potent iconographic fuel for the Medici artistic propaganda machine.

to *calcio* (soccer), animal baiting, and an equestrian ballet in the Piazza Santa Croce, while private events held solely for the eyes of the court included religious services at the Medici church of San Lorenzo and several theatrical performances in the Uffizi Theater.

In keeping with Ferdinando's desire to use these ceremonial occasions to publicly celebrate Medici maritime prowess, and more specifically the crusading efforts of the Order of Santo Stefano, both wedding celebrations culminated with grand water spectacles known as *naumachias*. The mock battles were held in the flooded courtyard of the grand-ducal residence, the Pitti Palace, and on the Arno River in 1589 and 1608 respectively, so as to be accessible to both elite and popular audiences. The first battle pitted Christians against Ottoman Turks while the second dramatized the battle of the mythic hero Jason, leader of the Argonauts, to capture the Golden Fleece.

The *naumachia* held to celebrate Ferdinando and Christine on May 11, 1589 was the climax of a day of grand pageantry held at the Pitti Palace that included a parade of triumphal chariots, a foot combat, and a fireworks display.[50] In contrast to Christine's entry into Florence, it was a private performance limited to the grand-ducal entourage, courtiers, and celebrated guests from other European courts.

Like the triumphal entry, the Renaissance *naumachia* was modeled after those orchestrated by the emperors of Rome. Julius Caesar is believed to have been the first emperor to stage a *naumachia*, to mark his great victory over Gaul, Egypt, Pontus, and Africa in 46 BCE. The greatest showplace in ancient Rome, the Colosseum, was also home to sea battles, including a *naumachia* staged by Emperor Titus in 80 CE during the 100 days of celebration marking the dedication of the structure. Emperor Augustus dug a *stagnum* (basin) specifically for these types of water display near the Tiber in Trastevere and in 2 BCE staged the Battle of Salamis with a *naumachia* involving approximately thirty ships and 3,000 men.[51]

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[50] Both Saslow and Blumenthal (*Theater Art*) provide extensive background on the events at the Pitti leading up to the *naumachia*.

[51] On the *naumachia* in imperial Rome: K.M. Coleman, "Launching into History: Aquatic Displays in the Early Empire," *Journal of Roman Studies* 83 (1993), pp. 48–74; and F. Garello, "Sport or Showbiz? The *naumachie* at Imperial Rome," in *Games and Festivals in Classical Antiquity: proceedings of the conference held in Edinburgh 10–12 July 2000*, eds. Sinclair Bell and Glenys Davies (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2004), pp. 115–24. The Roman historians Suetonius (69–122 CE) and Cassius Dio (*c.* 150/165–235 CE) provided Renaissance audiences with accounts of the *naumachias* in their

Although the Pitti *naumachia* was the first of its kind held in Florence, nautical displays were an integral part of court spectaculars in Spain and France, including a *naumachia* staged in Lyon in 1548 to mark the coronation of Catherine de' Medici, descendant of Lorenzo "il Magnifico" de' Medici (1449–1492) and Christine's future grandmother, as queen of France.[52] The Pitti *naumachia* linked the Florentine dynasty to the grandeur of imperial Rome while also acknowledging Christine's French heritage and the bond that existed between the two courts.

For the staging of the *naumachia*, Bernardo Buontalenti (*c.* 1531–1608), the Medici court architect who served as designer for all of the theatrical events of the 1589 festivities, created a watertight floor for the palace courtyard and built special hydraulic flooding equipment. A canopy of red cloth provided a roof enclosure for the audience who sat on tiered seating ringing the courtyard and upper floor balconies amidst stucco statues of warriors and paintings representing notable battles between the Christians and the Ottoman Turks. Buontalenti's feat of engineering was in part what made the Pitti *naumachia* such an impressive spectacle. The audience returned from their dinner banquet to find the courtyard transformed into a basin flooded up to a depth of five feet.[53]

Lives of the Caesars (*c.* 110 CE) and *Roman History* (early 3rd century CE) respectively; see Jordan, "Galley Warfare," p. 564. Renaissance antiquarians like architect Pirro Ligorio also were influential in popularizing the *naumachia* in the early modern period. Ligorio's 1561 map of ancient Rome included images of a *naumachia* basin as well as an actual performance in progress, drawn from his study of ancient coins; see Howard Burns, "Pirro Ligorio's Reconstruction of Ancient Rome: the Anteiqvae Vrbis Imago of 1561" in, *Pirro Ligorio: Artist and Antiquarian*, ed. Robert W. Gaston (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 1988), p. 81.

[52] *Feste e apparati medicei*, p. 85. Catherine was well known for her magnificent court spectacles, several of which had water components. As part of her dowry, Christine transported to Florence a set of eight tapestries commissioned by Catherine, several of which commemorated naval festivals at the French court; see Frances Yates, *The Valois Tapestries* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1975); Strong, *Art and Power*, pp. 105–109; and Testaverde, p. 361 (cat. entry 224), in *Medici, Michelangelo*. *Naumachias* were also an integral part of court performances in Spain in the sixteenth century. A grand *naumachia* representing the Siege of Malta greeted King Philip II upon his arrival in Valencia in 1586 and in 1570 a *naumachia* was celebrated in the flooded courtyard of the Prado Palace to welcome his third bride to Madrid; see Braden Frieder, *Chivalry and the Perfect Prince: Tournaments, Art, and Armor at the Spanish Habsburg Court* (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2008), p. 103; and Jordan, "Galley Warfare," p. 567.

[53] Buontalenti achieved this technological feat by constructing a nearly six foot high barricade covered in pitch which encircled the lower level of the courtyard; Saslow,

The details of the *naumachia* are known primarily through the "diaries" of Giuseppe Pavoni (*c.* 1551–1641) and Simone Cavallino (dates unknown), published in Bologna and Rome respectively in the months following the festivities. Orazio Scarabelli and Cherubino Alberti's print recording the performance positions the viewer at the ideal vantage point from which to survey the flooded courtyard, alongside Ferdinando and Christine in the grand-ducal box, facing towards the Boboli Gardens and the specially constructed Turkish castle backdrop.[54] (fig. 13.6)

The *naumachia* participants were comprised of sailors from the actual crews populating Ferdinando's galleys as well as some of the foreign seamen who had guided Christine's fleet to Tuscan shores.[55] The naval battle itself involved eighteen small ships or *navicelli* and over one hundred Christian knights, many wearing costumes of pink and turquoise, the colors of Ferdinando's livery. The Ottoman forces commanded a single *navicello*, leaving fourteen of their soldiers "on land" to defend their castle. They were dressed in exotic garb and occasionally cried out in Turkish to add authenticity to their performance. Amidst fireworks simulating artillery bombardments, the battle culminated in an attack by the Christian navy on the Turkish fortress. The knights, per chivalric tradition, presented the enemy flag to Christine following their triumph, and the evening ended with celebratory music and singing.

Further underscoring the importance of advertising Medici maritime prowess to the wedding audiences, the Pitti celebration was the second mock sea battle staged for the nuptials of 1589. Prior to the Florentine

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Medici Wedding of 1589, p. 165. Giuseppe Pavoni, *Diario*, p. 41, records that the audience was stupefied by the great things accomplished in such a short time ("stupefatti gran cose"). As was typical for Medici theatrical events of this period, the Pitti audience was segregated by gender. Only the men populating the upper floor balconies are visible in the Scarabelli print. The women sat on tiered seating ringing the courtyard; Blumenthal, *Theater Art*, p. 27.

[54] Pavoni, *Diario*, pp. 35–43; and Simone Cavallino, *Raccolta di tutte le solennissime feste nel sponsalitio della Serenissima Gran Duchessa di Toscana, fatte in Fiorenza il mese di maggio 1589* (Rome: Blado, 1589), pp. 40–46. For modern assessments of the *naumachia*, see Saslow, *Medici Wedding of 1589*, pp. 165–69; and Blumenthal, *Theater Art*, pp. 25–27. An account of the preparations that took place at the Pitti Palace prior to the start of the festivities, from the search for used boats to the construction of the hydraulic flooding apparatus, is provided by Saslow, pp. 96–97.

[55] Saslow, *Medici Wedding of 1589,* p. 169, deduced that a number of the participants—identified in court documents based on their ports of origin including Corfu, Genoa, Naples, Crete, Marseilles, and Cyprus—were hired from among the foreign sailors who had assisted in Christine's transport to Florence.

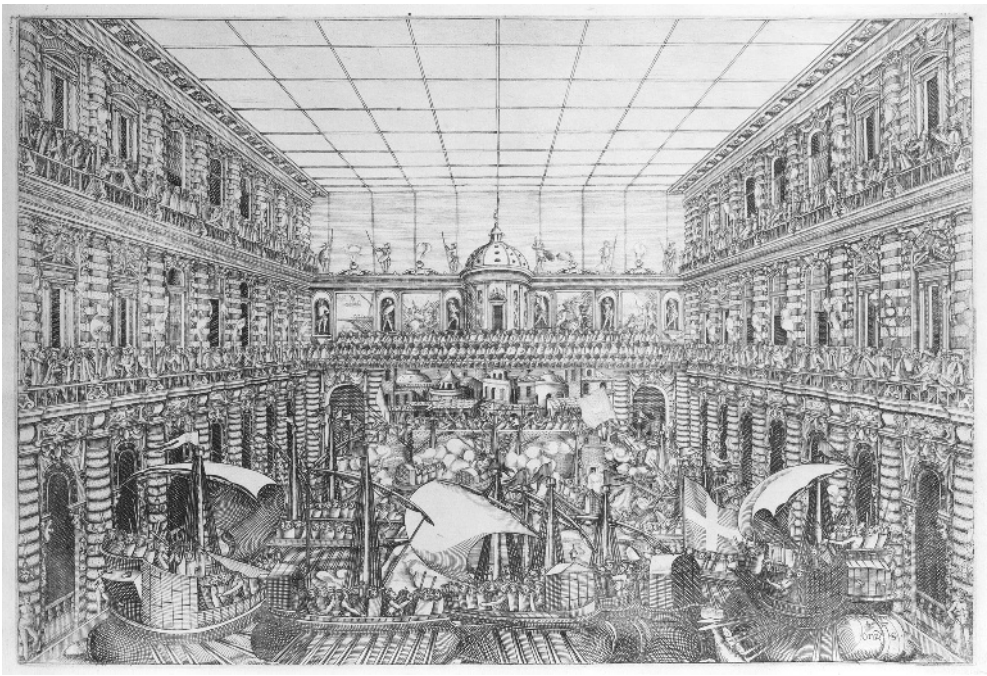

Fig. 13.6 Orazio Scarabelli and Cherubino Alberti (after Bernardo Buontalenti), *Naumachia in the Courtyard of Palazzo Pitti* (1589), engraving (27 × 40 cm). Photo: courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1931, 31.72.5(11). © The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

festivities a number of events were celebrated in Pisa, the so-called second city of the grand duchy.[56] These included a *naumachia* staged on the Arno River in front of the grand-ducal palace, the Palazzo Reale, on the night of April 26. In contrast to the Pitti spectacle, the Pisan *naumachia* was not limited to an elite court audience. According to Giovanni Cervoni (b. 1508), official chronicler of Christine's visit to Pisa, the streets, windows, rooftops, and bridges were choked with people—20,000 by his estimate—men, women, young, old, secular, religious, nobles, and plebes, all hoping to catch a glimpse of the grandiose festivities that had transformed the banks of the Arno into a theater ("essendo il lung'Arno in forma di Teatro").[57]

[56] Due to its mild climate, Pisa served as the official winter residence of the grand dukes, and it in effect became the capital of the Medici state from December to February.

[57] Giovanni Cervoni, *Descrizione delle pompe e feste fatte ne la citta di Pisa per la venuta de la S. Madama Christina de l'Oreno Gran Duchessa di Toscana. Nella quale*

The Pisan *naumachia* also involved a Christian fleet defeating a group of Ottoman ships, the crews of which were a mix of Turks, costumed in turbans and holding scimitars, and Moors, whose identity was indicated by blackened faces and hands. Four galleys belonging to the grand duke (one flying a Medici standard), and several others representing the Genoese and a ship of Arabs hailing from the Christian empire of Prete Ianni (part of modern-day Ethiopia), comprised the Christian fleet. Fireworks simulating cannon and gun fire exploded overhead as the Christians defeated their "barbarian" foes while Christine watched from a window in the family palace.[58]

While the Turks were standard villains in court entertainments during the sixteenth century owing to the ongoing struggle between the forces of Christianity and Islam in the Mediterranean, a public performance involving the defeat of Ottoman ships in Pisa, the academic and ceremonial headquarters of the Order of Santo Stefano, was loaded with additional political meaning.[59] A number of prestigious Pisan families were members of the order and the knights had a visible presence in the city. The Piazza dei Cavalieri, location of the order's palace and church and a frequent site of parades involving the order's membership,[60] was only blocks away from the very waters that hosted

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si contano l'entrata, la battaglia navale, la battaglia del Ponte, la luminaria, i fuochi artificiali, ecc., (Florence: Marescotti, 1589), p. 14. Cervoni's book was dedicated to Piero Usimbardi, secretary of state to Ferdinando and the recently appointed Bishop of Arezzo (1589–1612).

[58] *Ibid.*, pp. 16–26, for details of the Pisan *naumachia*; also see Gualterotti, *Descrizione del regale apparato*, vol. 1, pp. 17–18; and Saslow, *Medici Wedding of 1589*, pp. 130–32.

[59] Cosimo had chosen Pisa as the site for his order due to its pre-existing maritime tradition. A Florentine possession since 1405, Pisa was initially important due to its position at the mouth of the Arno and its ability to provide access to the Mediterranean for the city's naval fleet. However, over the course of the fifteenth century, Pisa's harbor steadily silted up, and by the late-sixteenth century the majority of the grand duchy's maritime activity had shifted to the port of Livorno. During the sixteenth century, the Medici grand dukes were devoted to restoring the Pisan maritime identity, exploiting this considerable source of civic pride in order to aid their ruling agenda in the city. The presence of the sea-faring Cavalieri di Santo Stefano in Pisa surely rekindled a certain sense of communal pride and helped the city to reclaim some aspect of the naval dominance it had possessed in earlier centuries. Cosimo converted the palace that had originally served as the civic headquarters of the chief public bodies of the Pisan Republic into the main residence for his knights, a loss of Pisan identity that was cleverly disguised as a privilege, suggesting that Cosimo had favored the Pisans by selecting their city to house his chivalric order.

[60] In addition to celebrations following their victories at sea which would become increasingly frequent during the first decades of the seventeenth century, the Piazza dei Cavalieri was the site of the grand procession held during the triennial meeting of the Capitolo Grande that involved the order's entire membership. For a detailed

the *naumachia*, and the order's vessels were constructed in the nearby shipyard.[61] The victory of the Christian ships during the performance surely encouraged the viewers who crowded the streets and bridges to recall the "real life" triumphs of the Cavalieri in the Mediterranean and allowed them to participate vicariously in the knights' religious crusade.

Both *naumachias* of 1589 emphatically asserted the crucial role played by the Cavalieri di Santo Stefano in the ongoing war against the Ottoman Empire. They represented a visual and propagandistic high point in terms of Ferdinando's articulation of his identity as Christian knight and defender of the church against the infidel. Through these naval spectaculars, one public, one private, this message could be transmitted to both elite and popular audiences.[62]

Following the model of the 1589 festivities, on the evening of November 3, 1608, the climactic event of the wedding of Cosimo II and Maria Maddalena was conducted on the Arno River. A *naumachia* representing the battle for the Golden Fleece between the mythic hero Jason, leader of the Argonauts, and the inhabitants of the island of Colchis was staged between two of the city's primary bridges, the Ponte Santa Trinità and the Ponte alla Carraia.[63] (fig. 13.7) In keeping

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description of the ritual procession, see Fulvio Fontana, *Le glorie immortali della sacra, ed illusstriss.ma [sic] religione de S. Stefano, tanto nelle armi quanto nelle lettere* (Milan: Sirtori, 1706), pp. 17–19. It is this celebration that Ferdinando transferred to Florence in 1608 on the occasion of the wedding of Cosimo II and Maria Maddalena.

[61] A new shipbuilding yard, the Arsenale Mediceo, was constructed between 1548 and 1588, and two canals, the Canale dei Navicelli and Canale di Ripafratta, built to connect Pisa to Livorno and to Lucca respectively, allowed for quicker and safer traffic between the Tuscan ports; see Ricardo Ciuti, *Pisa Medicea: Itinerario storico artistico tra cinque e Seicento* (Pisa: Felici, 2003), pp. 18–25.

[62] The performance sites of the Medici *naumachias* mirrored antique practice, entertaining the populace in Pisa, as at the Colosseum, and the elite audience at the Pitti Palace, like the mock battles staged within the gardens of the imperial villas; see Patrick Eyres, "British Naumachias: The Performance of Triumph and Memorial," in *Performance and Appropriation: Profane Rituals in Gardens and Landscapes*, ed. Michel Conan (Washington, DC: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection with Harvard University Press, 2007), pp. 171–73.

[63] The principal source for the *Argonautica* is Rinuccini's festival book; see *Descrizione delle feste*, pp. 56–66, and pp. 107–14 (for Cini). The text for the performance, Francesco Cini's poem, a synopsis of the Argonautic legend and its heroes, was first published separately as *L'Argonautica del s. Francesco Cini rappresentata in Arno per le nozze del Sereniss. D. Cosimo de Medici, Principe di Toscana, e della Serenissima Arciduchessa Maria Maddalena d'Austria, in Firenze l'anno MDCVIII* (Florence: Marescotti, 1608). It was subsequently bound in with later editions of Rinuccini. For

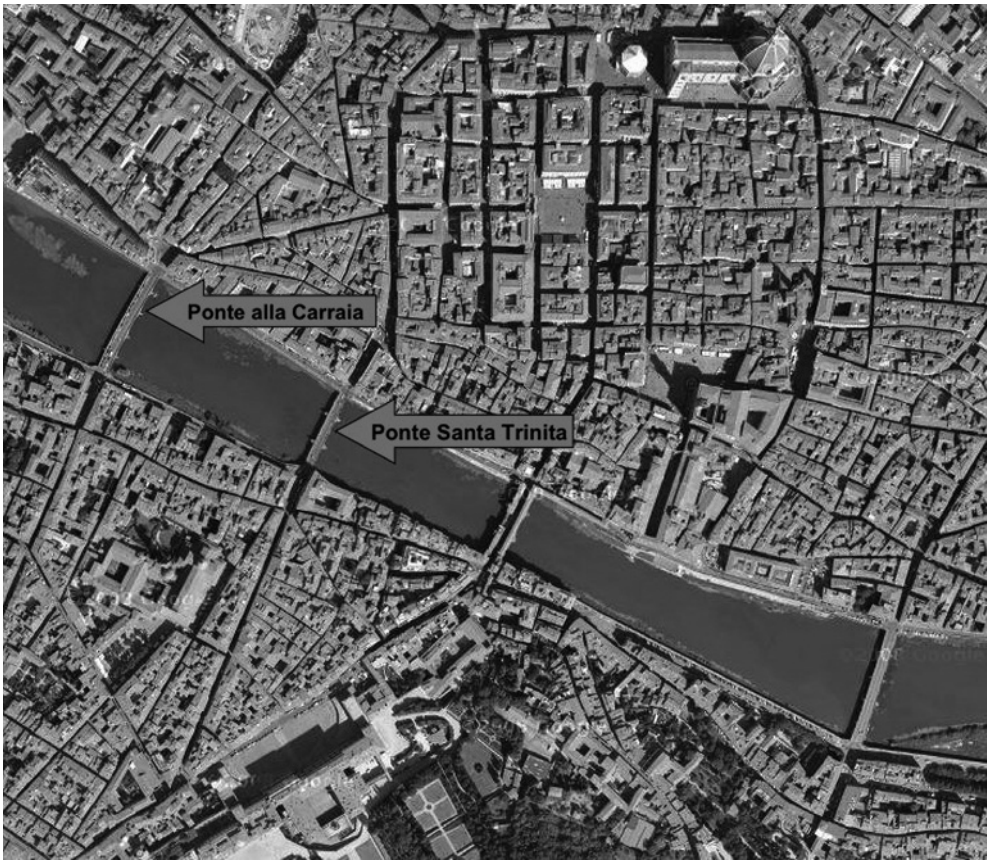

Fig. 13.7 Aerial view of the Arno River, Florence, Italy. Photo: courtesy Google Earth.

with the overall tenor of the Medici prince's wedding to the Habsburg archduchess, namely pageantry on such a grand scale as to be unprecedented in the history of Medici celebrations, the so-called *Argonautica* was arguably the most spectacular maritime-themed performance ever staged in Florence.[64]

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contemporary sources: *Feste e apparati medicei*, pp. 120–27; Blumenthal, *Theater Art*, pp. 35–37, 57–86; Nagler, *Theater Festivals*, pp. 111–15; and Testaverde, pp. 357–58 (cat. entry 221) in *Medici, Michelangelo*.

[64] Rinuccini, *Descrizione delle feste*, p. 75, praised the *Argonautica* as a spectacular above all others ("più superba di tutte l'atre") due to its great variety of action (both on land and in the water, above the bridges and below), the richness of ornament, the

In contrast to the Pitti battle in which viewers were limited to the Medici court, the *naumachia* of 1608, like the water spectacle staged in Pisa in 1589, encouraged the participation of the majority of Florentines.[65] The elite audience viewed the lavish production from a specially constructed loggia on the Lungarno Guicciardini midway between the two bridges, while the Florentine citizenry jammed the windows of neighboring buildings and crowded onto the Ponte Santa Trinità and the grandstands erected on the banks of the Arno.[66]

For the Arno *naumachia*, the Argo, a lone ship in the mythic narrative, was transformed into a fleet of sixteen boats, commanded by mythological heroes such as Hercules, Agamemnon, Orpheus, and the Dioscuri, Castor and Pollux, who in turn were guided by Olympian gods including Neptune, Bacchus, Mercury, and Jupiter. Giulio Parigi, recently promoted to court architect after the death of Buontalenti in June 1608, designed and executed the majority of the richly ornamented and fantastical ships and also appears to have assisted in the creation of the elaborate costumes worn by the participants. The construction of the ships was financed by a number of Tuscan aristocrats, and these same men also participated in the spectacle aboard various vessels. Nineteen etchings by Remigio Cantagallina (*c.* 1585–1656)

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abundance of fireworks, and its great crowd of people, among other notable elements. Nagler, *Theater Festivals*, p. 111, contends that the desire to produce such a magnificent event may have arisen from a sense of courtly rivalry. In May 1608, the Mantuan court has staged a *naumachia* on the Lago di Mezzo in celebration of the wedding of Francesco Gonzaga and Margherita of Savoy. Mirroring the Pitti *naumachia* of 1589, the battle involved the conquest of a Turkish fortress.

[65] By setting the *Argonautica* on the Arno, the Medici tapped into an important source of civic pride and identity in Florence. As noted by Sharon Strocchia, the Arno was not only crucial to Florentine industry, as the water provided transport routes, powered mills, and helped clean and dye the textiles that were a critical part of Florence's economy, the river was valued and praised for its beauty; "Theaters of Everyday Life," pp. 77–80. There is evidence to suggest that as early as the 14th century, the Florentines exploited the Arno and the ready-made viewing platforms of the surrounding bridges to stage water spectacles. See Mark Rogers' discussion of the infamous May Day festival in 1304 in which the Florentines staged the "Hell on the Arno" between the same two bridges as the *Argonautica; Art and Public Festival in Renaissance Florence*, pp. 82–91.

[66] Nagler, *Theater Festivals*, pp. 111–12. Anna Maria Testaverde has argued that the Medici acknowledgement of the popular audience in the *Argonautica* marked the beginning of a larger movement aimed at involving of the Florentine citizenry at the grand-ducal court; p. 358 (cat. entry 221) in *Medici, Michelangelo*. Several grandiose Medici festivals were staged on the Arno during the reign of Cosimo II, including two prominent water spectaculars held on the Feast of St. James (July 25) in 1616 and 1619; Blumenthal, *Theater Art*, pp. 92–93, 125–27.

completed following these designs survive, as do many preparatory drawings. The etchings document each of the sixteen ships comprising the Argonautic fleet as well as the lead ship of the army of Colchis.[67] (figs. 13.8–13.9)

One of the most reproduced images from the 1608 wedding is an etching produced by Matthias Greuter to illustrate the text of Rinuccini's festival book. It offers a bird's eye view of the Arno during the *Argonautica* and is labeled to indicate the various ships and

Fig. 13.8 Remigio Cantagallina (after Giulio Parigi), *The Argonautica: Ship of Amphion, Guided by Mercury* (1608), etching. Photo: courtesy Redwood Library & Athenaeum, Newport, RI.

[67] Blumenthal, *Theater Art*, p. 59. Parigi designed thirteen of the sixteen ships manned by the Argonauts. Ludovico Cigoli, designer of the entry program, created one ship, and Jacopo Ligozzi, another principal Medici court artist, contributed the final two ships. The Colchian fleet was comprised of sixteen ships, also designed by Parigi, but they did not possess the same decorative variety as the Argonautic Armada. Blumenthal reproduces sixteen of the etchings with accompanying text in *Theater Art*, pp. 57–86; see also *Feste e apparati medicei*, pp. 126–27 on various preliminary drawings for the vessels and costumes; and Nagler, *Theater Festivals*, figs. 75–88.

Remigio Cant.a Gallina F
POLIFEMO E PALEMONIO ARGONAVTI CONDOTTI DA CERERE
Battaglia Nau.de Rapp.te In Aria per Le Nozze del Ser.mo Princ.e di Toscana. L'an.o 1608 Giulio Parigi I

Fig. 13.9 Remigio Cantagallina (after Giulio Parigi), *The Argonautica: Ship of Polyphemus and Palaemon* (1608), etching. Photo: courtesy of Redwood Library & Athenaeum, Newport, RI.

participants.[68] (fig. 13.10) The print communicates not only the overwhelming magnitude of the pageantry but also gives a good sense of the sheer number of spectators involved. In addition, the bottom third of the print with its illustration of four of the "battle" formations allows the viewer to witness the performance narrative as it unfolded.[69]

The ship of Hercules was the first of the Argonautic vessels to sail into view from the east, passing under the Ponte Santa Trinità. Commanded by Guidobaldo Brancadoro (d. 1625), a knight of the Order of Santo Stefano, the boat set the stage for the grand spectacle

[68] Blumenthal, *Theater Art*, p. 35. Like Greuter's etching of Maria Maddalena's triumphal entry, this print was also produced to illustrate Rinuccini's text. The grand-ducal loggia, erected for the Medici courtiers, including Maria Maddalena and her new in-laws, Ferdinando and Christine, is visible at the top middle of Greuter's print, labeled with a "V".

[69] The print's inscription indicates that it was commissioned by Baron Christoph von Losenstein, a cousin of Maria Maddalena and himself a participant in the *Argonautica* aboard the chariot of Neptune; Blumenthal, *Theater Art*, p. 35, 67.

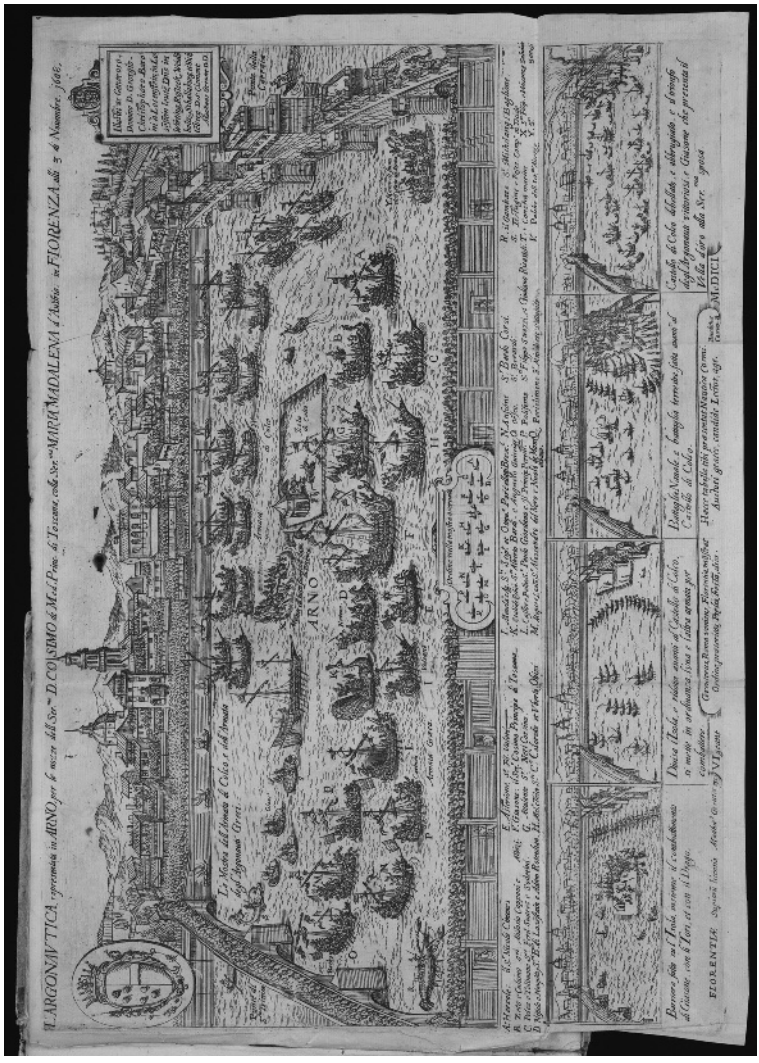

Fig. 13.10 Matthias Greuter, *The Argonautica in the Arno River* (1608), etching. Photo: courtesy Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

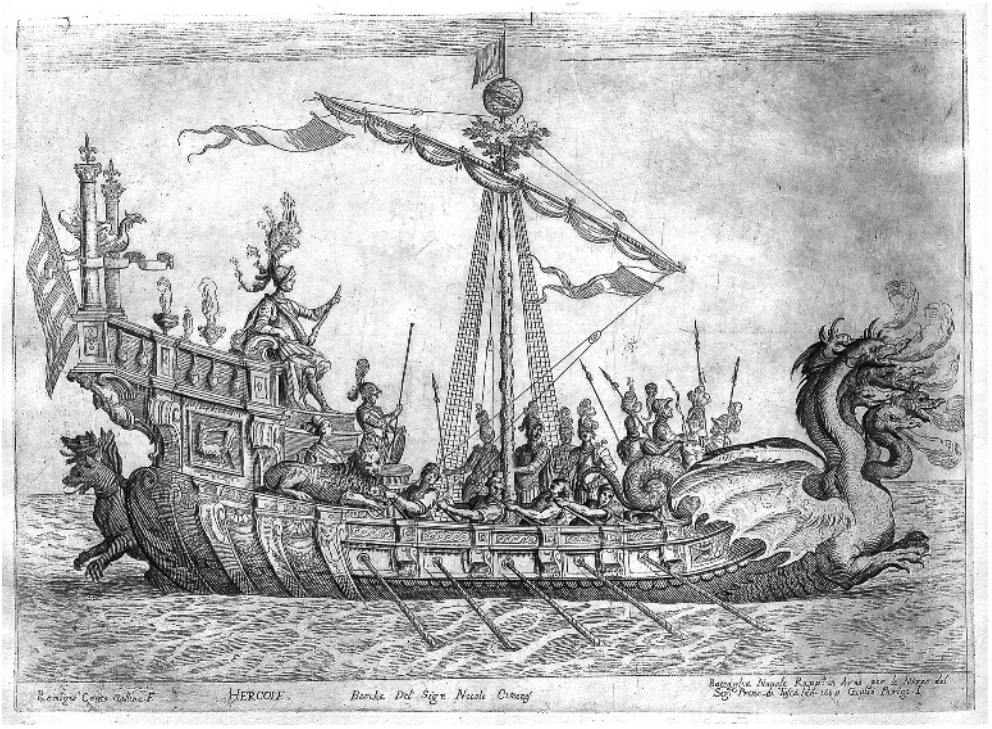

Fig. 13.11 Remigio Cantagallina (after Giulio Parigi), *The Argonautica: Ship of Hercules* (1608), etching. Photo: courtesy Redwood Library & Athenaeum, Newport, RI.

to come with a bow comprised of a multi-headed hydra that emitted flames and a carved image of a snarling Cerberus, the three-headed dog and guardian of the underworld, as its rudder.[70] (fig. 13.11) Hercules was an appropriate choice to lead off the fleet. This particular Argonaut not only possessed great civic importance for Renaissance Florentines who regarded the pagan hero as the legendary founder of their city, he also had been co-opted by the Medici as a prominent symbol of their power beginning in the fifteenth century.[71]

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[70] Rinuccini, *Descrizione delle feste*, pp. 67–68; and Nagler, *Theater Festivals*, p. 112. As was typical of many of the Argonautic vessels, the ship's construction was financed by a Florentine Senator, Niccolò Cimenes, who also served as its lieutenant.

[71] Leopold Ettlinger's seminal article "Hercules Florentinus," in *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 16 (1972), pp. 119–42 is the authoritative source on the long history of Florentine association with Hercules as well as the subsequent co-opting of the potent civic symbol by the Medici. By the sixteen century Hercules featured prominently in the family's public and private commissions and Cosimo I in particular encouraged the identification; see Kurt W. Forster, "Metaphors of Rule: Political Ideology and History in the Portraits of Cosimo I de' Medici," *Mitteilungen*

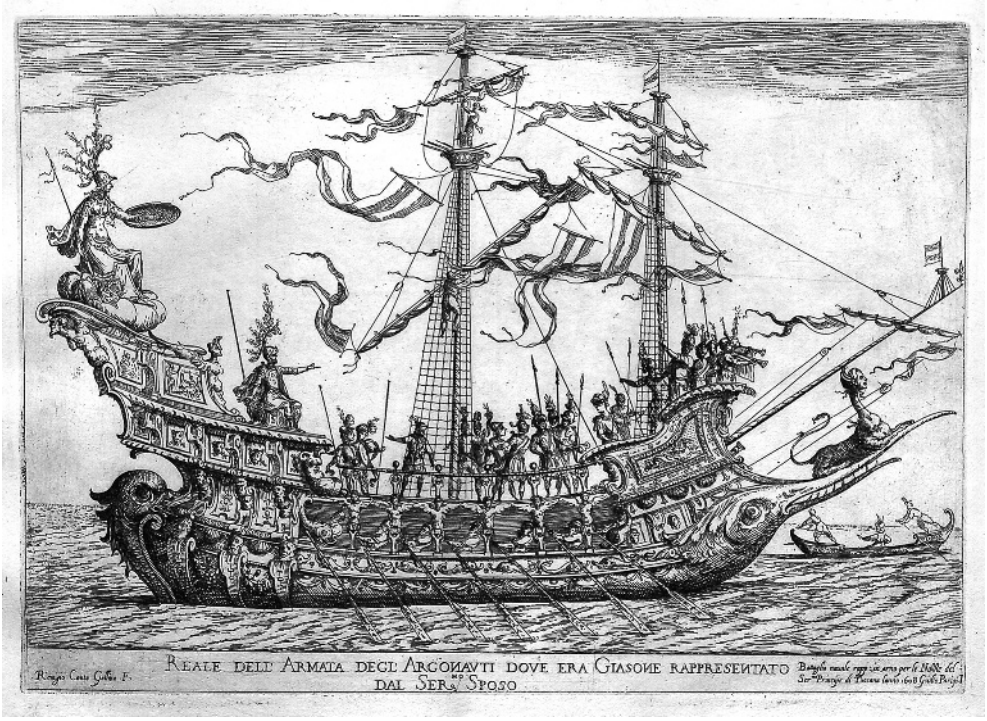

Fig. 13.12 Remigio Cantagallina (after Giulio Parigi), *The Argonautica: Ship of Jason, Guided by Pallas Athena* (1608), etching. Photo: courtesy Redwood Library & Athenaeum, Newport, RI.

Cosimo II, splendidly dressed in gilded armor and a gold cloak, captained the lead ship, Jason's Argo. Silvio Piccolomini (d. 1634), the Gran Contestabile of the Order of Santo Stefano, the highest "land" rank after Ferdinando, the grand master, served as his lieutenant.[72] (fig. 13.12) The vessel, constructed to resemble the *bucintoro*, the state

des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz 15, no. 1 (1971), pp. 79–82. Hercules' vessel is identified by an "A" in Greuter's print.

[72] The *Argonautica* was not the first time that Cosimo II and Silvio Piccolomini had engaged in festival combat together. In 1606, a four-hour battle was staged on the grounds of the Pitti Palace, pitting Christian soldiers against the Turks (in reality, seventy German soldiers hired by the Medici and dressed like Turks) as they attempted to re-capture a fortress. The "battle" was staged by Giulio Parigi and choreographed by Piccolomini; see Cesare Tinghi, *Diario*, ff.162v.–162r, cited in Cornelia Danielson, *Livorno: A Study in 16th Century Town Planning in Italy* (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1987), pp. 110–11. Blurring the line between performance and reality, in September 1607 Piccolomini led a real military expedition of Christian knights against the Turks during the Cavalieri's conquest of the fortress at Bona.

galley of the Doges of Venice, must have been an awe inspiring sight with its lavish gilding and painted reliefs. A statue of Pallas Athena, goddess of wisdom and war, adorned the stern, her moveable hands and arms giving the appearance that she guided the ship.[73] The goddess' place of privilege was owed no doubt to her assistance in building the original Argo and clearly suggested her divine protection of the Medici prince and his fleet. Once the armadas were in position but prior to the start of the action, a few of the Argonauts on Jason's ship sang selected verses from the poem written by Francesco Cini (act. early 17th c.) on which the *Argonautica* performance was based, copies of which had been distributed to the guests of honor.[74]

In his quest for the Golden Fleece, guarded on an artificial island in the middle of the Arno, Cosimo/Jason negotiated waters populated by nymphs and nereids on seashells, floating reefs laden with river gods, a giant turtle, a whale, and even an enormous lobster. (fig. 13.13) As it approached the grand-ducal loggia, the lobster transformed into a barge on which sat the knight Periclymenus, who had been rewarded with the power to shape-shift by his grandfather Neptune.[75] Throughout the performance, these sea deities serenaded the grand-ducal party and presented the bride with various gifts, including six golden apples from the Garden of Hesperides symbolizing the Medici's distinctive coat of arms, the *palle*.[76]

Once on land Cosimo/Jason faced two fire-breathing bulls, a hissing dragon, and a band of warriors. While he pursued the fleece, the Argonauts and Colchian army engaged in a joust before returning to their respective ships. As it grew dark, torches were ignited on the ships and on the banks of the Arno. Since the vessels were constructed for show rather than combat, the majority of the action took place on the floating island and on the Ponte alla Carraia, which had been transformed into the city of Colchis for the spectacle. At the battle's climax, the Argonauts rushed onto the bridge to attack the Colchian

[73] Rinuccini, *Descrizione delle feste*, p. 69. The ship is identified by an "F" in Greuter's print.

[74] Nagler, *Theater Festivals*, p. 114.

[75] *Ibid*. The final two etchings in Cantagallina's series of nineteen document these elements: the barges of the river isles accompanied by various sea deities, and the lobster float. These are identified by "R", "S", "T", "X," and "Y" in Greuter's print.

[76] Blumenthal, *Theater Art*, p. 86.

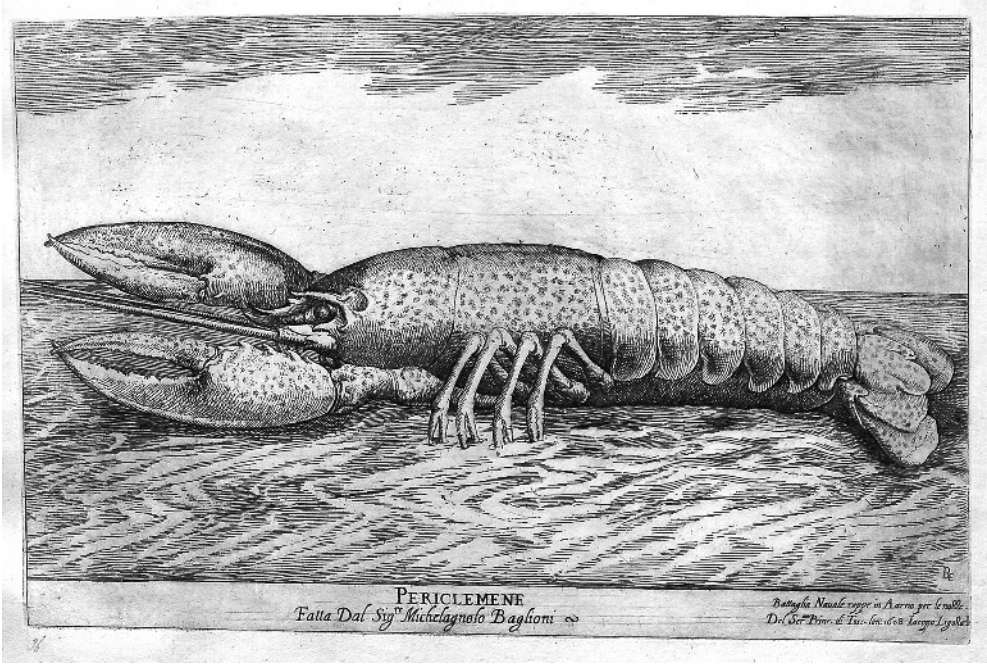

Fig. 13.13 Remigio Cantagallina (after Jacopo Ligozzi), *The Argonautica: Periclymenus in the Form of a Giant Lobster* (1608), etching. Photo: courtesy of Redwood Library & Athenaeum, Newport, RI.

stronghold.[77] Following the destruction of the enemy fortress, Cosimo delivered the fleece to his bride, Maria Maddalena.[78]

The *Argonautica* has been understood primarily as an acknowledgment of the power and prestige of the Habsburg dynasty, and specifically

[77] Nagler is the modern source that provides the most detailed description of the naval choreography, the appearance of the ships, and the participants; *Theater Festivals*, pp. 112–15.

[78] Arthur Blumenthal has suggested that Cosimo's gift of the fleece to Maria Maddalena was meant to transform her into a new Medea, the powerful sorceress and daughter of the King of Colchis. The Argonauts owed their success to Medea, as she fell so deeply in love with Jason that she turned her back on her own people in order to assist him in his quest for the fleece. Thus while celebrating her key role in the victory, the linkage of Maria Maddalena with Medea also indicated that as the bride of Cosimo, her loyalties were now with her new husband and his family, and that her allegiance to the Medici was stronger than to her Habsburg relatives. A drawing by Cantagallina of an unrealized ship for the Habsburg archduchess suggests that an early plan may have existed to involve Maria Maddalena in the *Argonautica* more directly, making this connection even stronger; see Blumenthal, *Theater Art*, pp. 59, 75–76.

their chivalric brotherhood, the Order of the Golden Fleece. Founded in 1429 by Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy (1396–1467), the order was devoted to the protection of the Catholic faith.

During the Middle Ages a crusade to the Holy Land was considered a metaphoric recreation of the voyage of the Argo and linked to the capture of the Golden Fleece. Philip, who counted Jason among his mythic ancestors, strengthened this association between the Christian crusades and the legend of the Fleece with his foundation of the order. Philip, the new Jason, and his faithful Argonauts would reclaim Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the Ottoman Turks, and in doing so defeat Islam and pave the way for the second coming of Christ.

Argonautic imagery became an integral component of Habsburg imperial identity during the reigns of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, heir to both the Burgundian and Spanish crowns, and his son Philip II, King of Spain. In 1565, Philip ordered the construction of a new royal war galley that he christened Argo, and it was this ship that led the Catholic fleet to victory at Lepanto.[79]

While surely designed to compliment the bride and the Habsburg attendees of the wedding, the *Argonautica* also flattered the Medici hosts. Imagery related to Jason and the Golden Fleece was not employed solely by the Habsburgs. It also was prominent during the reigns of Ferdinando's father Cosimo, and to a lesser extent, his brother, Francesco, due to their own memberships in the Order of the Golden Fleece.[80] The Medici family also possessed its own links to the Argonauts apart from Spanish influence. Beyond its claim to Hercules, the ruling family also considered the town of Portoferraio, a port on the island of Elba that was believed to have been visited by Jason and his loyal band of sailors, to be a Medici possession.[81]

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[79] Marie Tanner, *The Last Descendant of Aeneas: The Hapsburgs and the Mythic Image of the Emperor* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 5–7, 150–51.

[80] Ferdinando was never offered membership in the Order of the Golden Fleece, an honor that seems to have been inconsequential to the third Medici grand duke. The knights of Santo Stefano achieved great fame throughout Europe during his reign and consequently there was less need for him to accrue social and political prestige through inclusion in another dynasty's order.

[81] In the late 1540s, the Medici gained control of Portoferraio, originally called Porto Argo because of its Argonautic ties; see Giuseppe Battaglini, "Portoferraio," in *Livorno: progetto e storia di una città tra il 1500 e il 1600*, ed. Giacinto Nudi (Pisa: Nistri-Lischi, 1980), p. 312. For Francesco's wedding in 1565, the arch celebrating Medici maritime glory, and by extension the Cavalieri, displayed a painted allegory of

The most potent connection to the Argonauts, however, was the identification of the Cavalieri di Santo Stefano with the mythic sailors, and their heroic crusade against the Ottoman Turks in the Mediterranean and Tyrrhenian seas with the quest for the Golden Fleece. Not only was the high ranking Cavaliere di Gran Croce, Silvio Piccolomini, involved in the Arno spectacle, captaining a Medicean Argo and adopting a performative role very close to his leadership position within the Order of Santo Stefano, but the entire Argonautic fleet was filled with knights of the order, led by the soon-to-be grand master, Cosimo II.[82] Also significant was the fact that the original myth of Jason and the Golden Fleece was a land-based quest. Its transformation into a water battle and the single Argo into a fleet of heroic knights further strengthened the Medici connection to their maritime order. Furthermore, the *Argonautica* coincided with an ongoing attempt by Ferdinando to reclaim the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem and transport it to Florence, one of the founding missions of the Order of the Golden Fleece that was co-opted as a Medicean crusade.[83]

In this manner, the *Argonautica* was a very public attempt by Ferdinando to claim an Argonautic identity for the Medici and the Order of Santo Stefano independent of the Order of the Golden Fleece and the Habsburgs. Although less explicit in its references to the Ottoman enemy than the Pitti and Pisan spectacles, the *Argonautica*'s crusade-like quest would have resonated with Florentine aristocrats, many of whom belonged to the Order of Santo Stefano and many who also participated in the Arno spectacle. In addition, despite the fact that the general Florentine public may not have understood the nuances contained within the performance, they certainly understood the "us

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Elba with a narrative below depicting a scene of the Argonauts returning to Elba with Medea and the Golden Fleece. This scene provided a suggestive link between Jason and his Argonauts and Cosimo and his Cavalieri. On the 1565 arch decorations: Starn and Partridge, *Arts of Power*, pp. 277–78.

[82] Rinuccini, *Descrizione delle feste*, p. 94, identifies the "Argonauts." The list includes members of the most prominent Tuscan families including the Valori, Bardi, Guicciardini, and Salviati. In addition to Brancadoro and the high ranking Piccolomini, the ship of Meleager ("H" in the Greuter print) was captained by Cavaliere Priore Fabrizio Colloredo (1576–1645), also a principal commander during the ground assault on Bona.

[83] Regarding Ferdinando's interest in transferring the Holy Sepulcher to Florence, see Massimiliano Rossi, "Emuli di Goffredo: epica granducale e propaganda figurativa," in *L'arme e gli amori: la poesia di Ariosto, Tasso e Guarini nell'arte fiorentina del Seicento*, eds. Elena Fumagalli, Massimiliano Rossi, and Riccardo Spinelli (Livorno: Sillabe, 2001), pp. 32–42.

versus them" dichotomy: as they cheered for Jason and his quest, they also cheered for their prince, whose own quest as ruler of Tuscany and as grand master of the Order of Santo Stefano was just beginning.[84]

Although the military power and prestige of the Order of Santo Stefano reached its apex during the reign of Ferdinando I, imagery connected to the Cavalieri retained its propagandistic potency long after his death in 1609 and the subsequent decline of the order's maritime prowess. The lasting impact of Ferdinando's commissions on grand-ducal identity is evident in how readily the following generations embraced the imagery of the Cavalieri to secure their own power both at home and abroad. The use of the Cavalieri as subject matter became increasingly nostalgic in tone as the power of both the Medici and the Order of Santo Stefano began to wane. However, the commanding absolutist image of grand-ducal rule crafted by Ferdinando, specifically that of the valorous Christian knight, endured beyond the extinction of the Medici line in 1737, becoming an integral part of the ruling identity embraced by the inheritors of the grand duchy, the Habsburg-Lorraine archdukes.

The Medici weddings of 1589 and 1608 were grand declarations of power and prestige, designed to illustrate the family's parity with the royal courts of Europe, to awe the Florentine populace with Medici magnificence, and to inspire devotion to the city and its rulers. The use of imagery connected to the Cavalieri and the presence of the knights themselves invoked a shared sense of Catholic pride, unity and purpose in the face of a common enemy for all viewers, both elite and popular. Through the orchestration of the wedding spectaculars, most prominently the triumphal entries and the *naumachias*, the Medici transported the Christian crusade to Florence, inextricably binding its glory to the Medici, and announcing the grand duchy's arrival as a maritime power to be reckoned with on the European stage.

[84] Ferdinando died on February 7, 1609, shortly after Cosimo's wedding. On February 15, a few days following his investiture as grand duke, Cosimo II received the robes of the grand master of Santo Stefano in a ceremony held in the Duomo of Florence; Fontana, *I pregi della Toscana*, pp. 7–8.

PART V

LIMINALITY, RECEPTION, AND THE MEANING OF MOVEMENT

14. INTELLECTUAL PROJECTION, LIMINAL PENETRATION: PROGRAMMED ENTRY AND THE TYMPANUM-LESS PORTALS OF WESTERN FRANCE AND NORTHERN SPAIN[1]

Mickey Abel

By the last half of the eleventh century, the Charente-Poitou region of western France and the northern kingdoms of Spain were dotted with small rural churches.[2] (fig. 14.1) The distinguishing feature that visually links these buildings is their uniformly tympanum-less portal configuration. This semi-circular composition, set within a rectangular projection of the facade wall, is delineated by multiple, concentrically-aligned archivolts surrounding the dark, vacuous opening at the center. Resembling an archer's target, the gradation of shadow created by the inwardly telescoping arches accentuates the depth of the portal opening and defines the assemblage as a three-dimensional, concave space inviting penetration, compelling an inward momentum. (figs. 14.2, 14.3) Compounding this visual effect, the steps leading into the portal respond one-to-one, proportionally and relationally, to the diminishing arrangement of the archivolts overhead. Each step serves to physically lift and propel the devotee forward into the transitionally liminal space of the threshold, thereby focusing the perception of this viewing individual toward the center of the visual vortex created by the surrounding layers of the sculpted archivolts, each comprised of radially arranged and ornately carved voussoirs. (fig. 14.4)

Employing an expanded concept of space to include its conceived, perceived, and ritual properties in order to highlight the integration of the visual, the auditory, and, importantly, the kinetic experience,[3] I want to suggest that the reading—or active comprehension—of the

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[1] This material was first presented at the 39th annual meeting of the International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, 2004, in a session on "The Diagram in the Middle Ages," organized by Lynn Ransom.

[2] Mickey Abel, "Strategic Domain: Reconquest Romanesque along the Duero in Soria, Spain," *Peregrinations*, 2/2 (2007), 1–57, (http://peregrinations.kenyon.edu/vol2-2).

[3] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (London: Blackwell, 1974/1991), pp. 38–39.

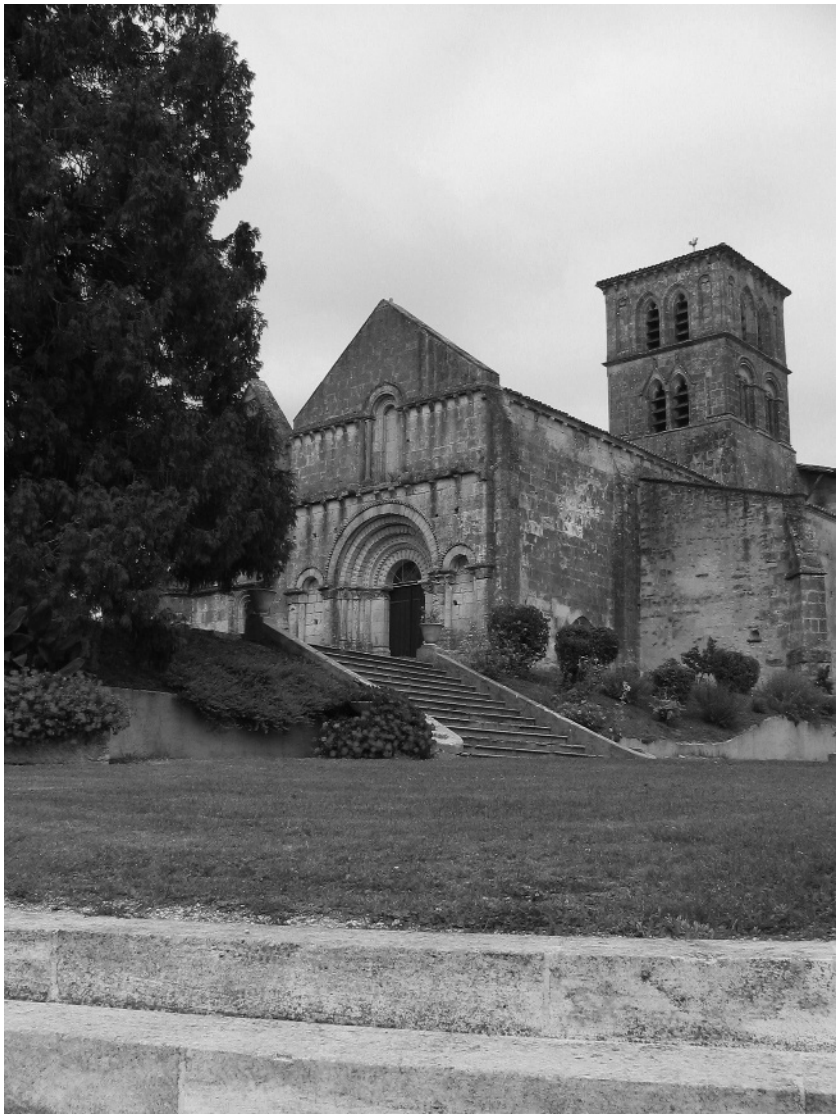

Fig. 14.1 Arthenac, France, west façade. Photo: author.

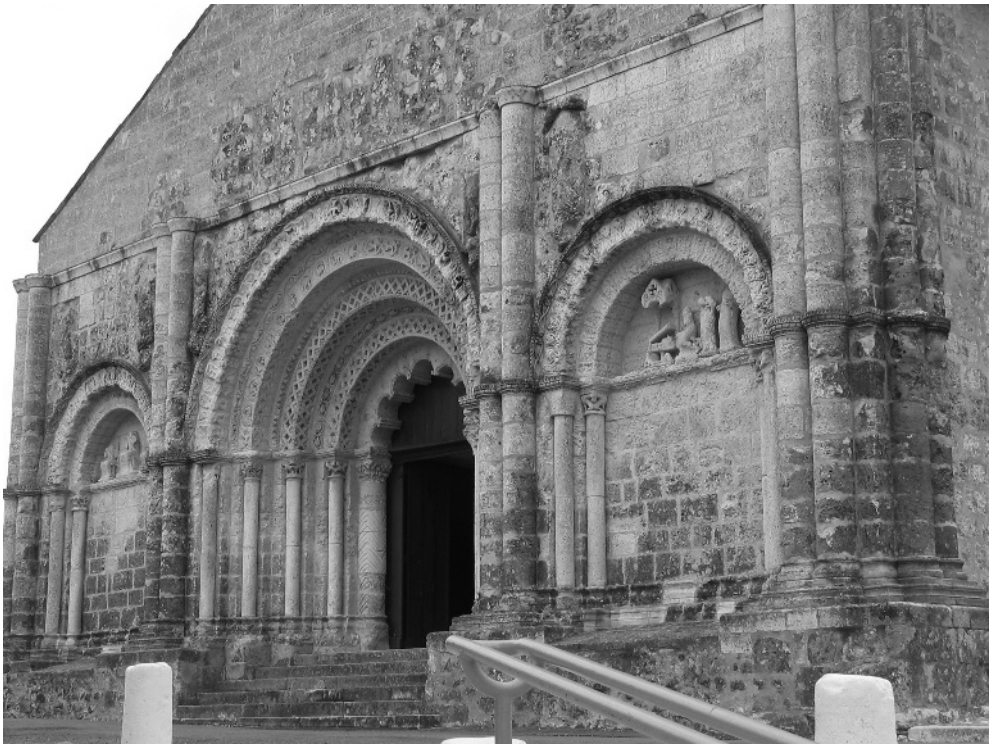

Fig. 14.2 Chalais, France, west façade. Photo: author.

tympanum-less, archivolted portal compositions was based on a system commonly employed within the didactic diagrams that accompanied many medieval scientific and philosophic texts. Moreover, like these two-dimensional diagrams, which were frequently used to explicate and integrate the concepts encompassed within the ancient disciplines of the Quadrivium, the portal compositions not only reflect a knowledge of these commingled and interrelated properties of mathematics, geometry, music, and astronomy,[4] but similarly used motion as the

[4] The term *Quadrivium* is credited to Boethius, who stated that "it is impossible to achieve the summit of perfection in the disciplines of philosophy unless one approached this noble wisdom by a kind of four-fold way." Boethius, *De Arithmetica*, Migne LXIII, 1079D, as quoted in V.E. Watts, "Introduction," Boethius, *The Consulation of Philosophy*, trans. V.E. Watts (New York: Penguin Books, 1969), p. 13. Nigel Hiscock, *The Symbol at Your Door: Number and Geometry in Religious Architecture of Greek and Latin Middle Ages* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), pp. 352–354, discusses the distinction between intention and interpretation, particularly in terms of medieval architectural design, for which we have few documents relating the thought behind the process.

Fig. 14.3 Biron, France, west façade. Photo: author.

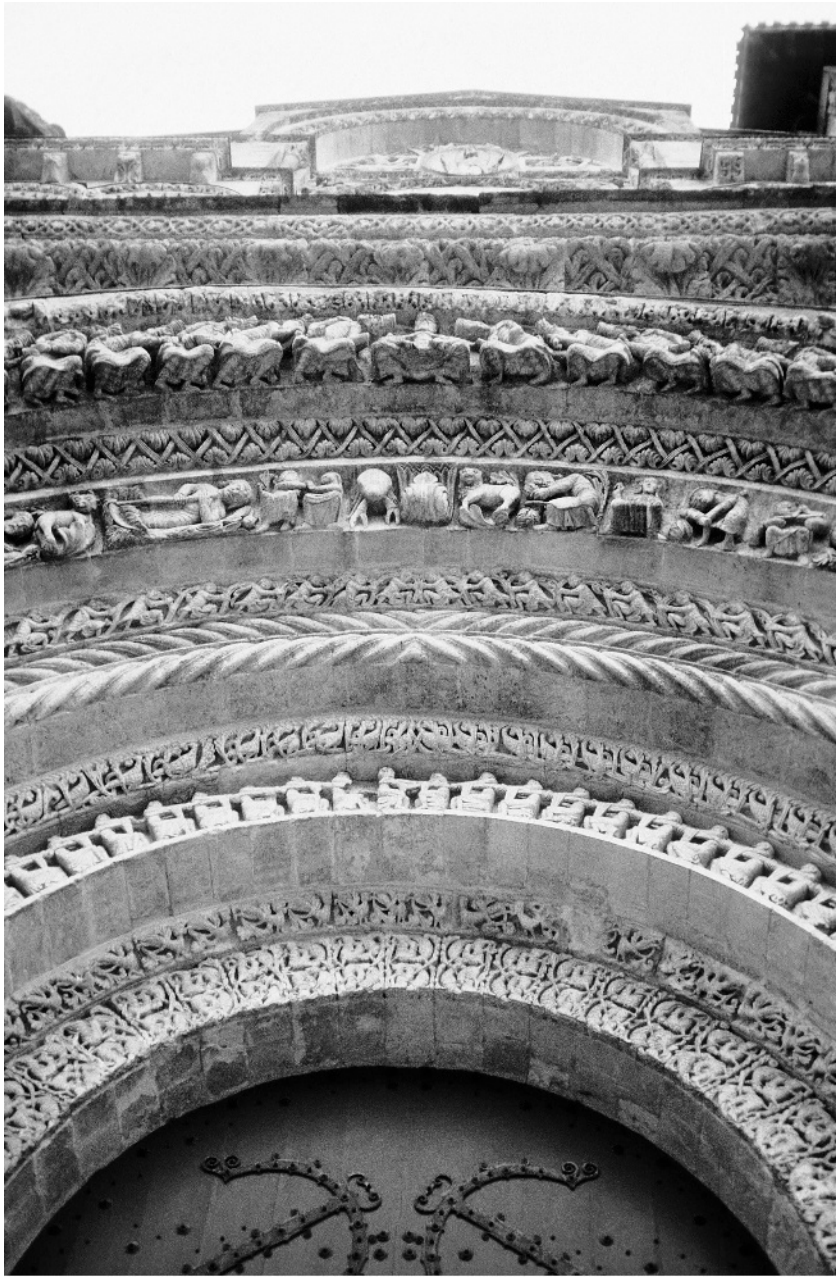

Fig. 14.4 St. Croix, Bordeaux, France, upward view of archivolts. Photo: Clark Maines.

common denominator to link the ideas depicted and as the method of reading.

Beginning with an analysis of two-dimensional diagrams found in medieval manuscripts, I will turn to the history, understanding, and application of each of the four disciplines, moving from Aristotle's and Plato's astronomical structures to the cosmological poetry of Boethius and Macrobius. In this, an examination of the different modes of language will allow for the incorporation of scientific thought coming out of the Arabic courts of medieval Spain where time, motion, and the metaphoric mapping of cosmological space can be seen to color and shape Christian notions of Salvation history. One of these modes of language is that of music, which like its mathematical cousins was conceived of as both quantitative and qualitative, as well as orderly, measured, and rational. Capable of producing a sense of harmony or affinity, the language of music was employed to enhance the liturgy and thus "move" the listening devotee. Bringing these various aspects together, it is my intent to illustrate the physical interpretation of this knowledge in the three-dimensional archivolted programs, where the devotee's ascending motion leading to the void of the liminal threshold was to be experienced in terms of the divine.

Empirically, the visual and kinetic aspects of these architectural/sculptural compositions can be perceived even today; the combination of diminishing arches and ascending steps remains effective in moving the visitor up and into the visually charged space of the portal. The essential character of this "moving" experience is the individual awareness or consciousness of the parishioner, pilgrim, monk, or cleric, where this participant becomes an object unto themselves in such a manner that the various stimuli are referenced in terms of their own attention or being.[5] These experiences are caused by acquaintance with logical constants and what we have in our memories, where the

[5] This portal configuration can be found on monasteries, parishes, and priories. There are several sources that address specific aspects of these sculptural programs, such as Linda Seidel, *Songs of Glory: The Romanesque Facades of Aquitaine* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); Myrielle Boss-Favre, *La Sculpture figure des Arcs romans de France* (Zurich: Grand Midi, 1987); Anat Tcherikover, *High Romanesque Sculpture in the Duchy of Aquitaine, c. 1090–1140* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); and to a lesser degree Calvin Kendall, *The Allegory of the Church: Romanesque Portals and their Verse Inscriptions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), but there is no comprehensive catalogue of the buildings in France and Spain that feature archivolted portals.

effects often continue after the stimulation ceases.[6] This type of empirical experience would not have been out of line with what we know of a medieval viewer/reader. The Venerable Bede (d. 735) recommended the expanded reliance on personal observation in his encyclopedic efforts, such as his *De Natura Rerum*. Similarly, Isidore of Seville (d. 636) in his *Etymologiae*, distinguishes between instances of empirical and non-empirical realities, stating that empirical understandings were well ingrained in contemporary mental habits.[7] Even read material was not considered knowledge until the work had been experienced, internalized, and thus embodied as one's own.[8] It is in this vein that more-contemporary medieval scholars such as Hugh of St. Victor (1096–1141) and Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) urged their students to construct for their memories physical structures based on verbal description and empirical knowledge (*descriptio mystica*).[9] Modern scholars of medieval liturgy, theology, and philosophy relate this medieval sense of the empirical experience with "the theological self's need to realize his/her presence in the homogenous space of the transcendent God, [which] involved the process of remembering or recollection."[10] Architectural historians have shown that this type of metaphysical experience was commonly accommodated and facilitated within the physical boundaries of the medieval ecclesiastical building.[11]

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[6] Wilson Coker, *Music and Meaning: A Theoretic Introduction to Musical Aesthetics* (New York: Free Press, 1972), p. 25.

[7] Brian Stock, "Science, Technology, and Economic Progress in the Early Middle Ages," in *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. David Lindberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. 34. While written significantly earlier than the dates of the buildings considered here, both Bede and Isidore of Seville were the most common texts found in monastic libraries.

[8] Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 10, 54, 57.

[9] Mary Carruthers, "Moving Images of the Mind's Eye," in *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, eds. Jeffrey Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 287–305.

[10] Michael Kobialka, in "Staging Place/Space in the Eleventh-Century Monastic Practices," *Medieval Practices of Space*, eds. Hanawalt and Kobialka (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p. 137. Some historians theorize that this identification with the transcendent God was meant to happen beyond the "confines of material time and space," as in Hugh's meditational exercise where he relates an imaginary description of the Ark of Noah. See Patrice Sicard, *Diagrammes médiévaux et exégèse visuelle: Le Libellus de formation arche de Hughes de Saint-Victor* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1993). See also Hugo de St.Victor, *De archa Noe*, ed P. Sicard, CCCM 176, 176A (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001).

[11] For an early understanding of architecture in this regard, see Günter Bandmann, "The Church as Heavenly City," *Early Medieval Architecture as Bearer of Meaning*, trans. Kendall Wallis (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951/2005), pp. 61–67.

Contrary to our being able to replicate the physical understanding of the archivolted configuration, the visual reading of the sculptural programs within these architectural spaces has become more problematic with the passage of time. This appears to be a function of the ornate quality of the imagery. The variety and elaboration of the ornamentation carved on the individual archivolts ranges widely, from the purely geometric to the predominantly figural; from the simple, comprised of two or three archivolts to the elaborate of ten or more individual arches. This imagery is confounding in that the individual motifs do not seem to follow a recognizable reading pattern or logical relation to one another; the deciphering process feels like the solving of a puzzle.[12] Reflecting Wolfgang Iser's *Theory of Aesthetic Response* and Paul Ricoeur's ideas on mimesis, we understand that the creation of a certain effect or illusion influences how something is read, and that in the absence of linear narrative, the reader will seek out meaning on his/her own terms.[13] It is in this sense that the reading of the

[12] What seems to our modern eyes to be a simple teasing out of an art historical mystery is actually a process consistent with the mental action necessary of a medieval viewer. See Carruthers, "Moving Images," p. 294. I have argued that these visual programs were not meant to be read in the narrative or didactic sense, but rather they required an intuitive process of mental *previsualization* and manipulation that would have been equally familiar to a beginning student of rhetoric and the educated cleric. See Mickey Abel, "Three Dimensional Voice: The Overlooked Language of the Archivolted Portals of Western France and Northern Spain," in *New Research on Architectural Sculpture*, ed. Claudia Rückert (Berlin: Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, 2009 (forthcoming). Karen Mathews, "Reading Romanesque Sculpture: The Iconography and Reception of the South Portal Sculpture at Santiago de Compostela," *Gesta* 39/1 (2000), pp. 3–12, suggests that while there were no doubt "super-readers"—the "consummate insiders," who had the education and knowledge necessary to understand imagery on the literal, metaphorical, and anagogical levels, accounts such as those recorded in the *Pilgrim's Guide*, illustrate alternative readings that varied from this "super-reader's" point of view, to include the purely emotional reactions to the space by those less-educated. See *The Pilgrim's Guide to Santiago de Compostela: Critical Edition*, ed. Paula Gerson *et al*., 2 vols. (London, Harvey Miller Press, 1998), pp. 74–77. Other studies on the reception of medieval art include Hans Belting, *The Image and its Public in the Middle Ages*, trans. M. Bartusis and R. Meyer (New York, A.D. Caratzas, 1990); Barbara Abou-El-Haj, "The Audiences for the Medieval Cult of Saints," *Gesta* 30 (1991), pp. 3–15; and B. Zeitler, "Cross-Cultural Interpretations on Imagery in the Middle Ages," *Art Bulletin* 76 (1994), pp. 680–694.

[13] Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978) and *The Implied Reader: Patterns of Communication in Prose Fiction from Bunyan to Beckett* (Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974); Paul Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* (Fort Worth, Texas Christian University Press, 1976). See also, Eelco Runia, "Presence," *History and Theory* 45 (2006), pp. 1–29.

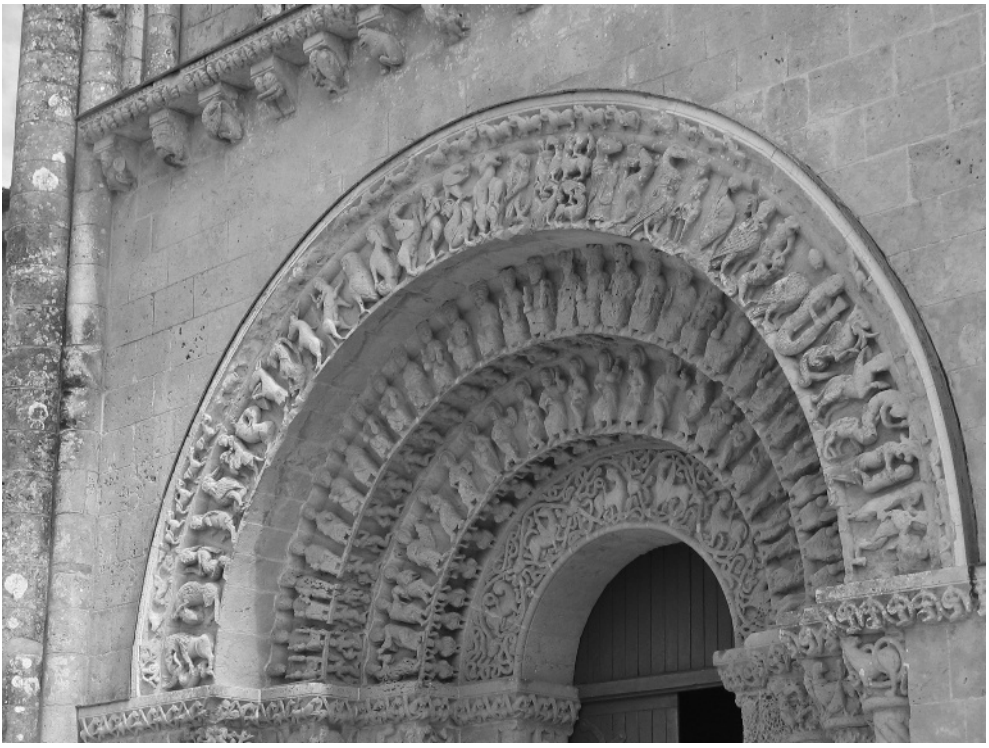

Fig. 14.5 Saint-Pierre de Aulnay-en-Saintonge, France, south transept portal. Photo: author.

unique configuration of the tympanum-less portals is an example of how mimesis—or the lack thereof—creates an experience of the presence of God read from the subjective position of the individual.

By way of example, one of the better preserved of these archivolted programs is the portal on the south transept arm of St. Pierre de Aulnay.[14] (fig. 14.5) Here the portal opening sits at the top of four steps, each covered by a responding archivolt supported by an engaged column. The outer molding of the archivolt program is badly deteriorated, but contains a small row of four-legged animals, each with a tendril of an intertwining vine in its mouth so as to connect the animals in a running string or parade following the arc of the semi-circular composition. Under this molding, the highest archivolt depicts an elaborate

[14] The identifiable iconography is catalogued in Boss-Favre, *La Sculpture*, p. 449.

bestiary comprised of thirty-six different animals, which conform to the radiating alignment of the individual voussoirs. Below this, and also radially aligned, is a row of seated men identified as the Elders of the Apocalypse by their viols and phials. Thirty-one of these crowned figures (normally twenty-four) sit rigidly with their feet extended out over the rolled molding of the soffit edge. Although slightly differentiated, their static, front-facing pose causes these figures to appear to be identical. This implied repetition creates a rhythmic pattern across the arch. Concealed under this row of figures, on the soffit face of the arch, a row of supporting soldiers kneel on one knee and raise their right hands in a pledging gesture. This row of figures is difficult to see from a frontal approach, and even when they do come into view by looking up from within the space of the portal unit, they appear upside down in relation to the viewer's position. Upon exiting—that is when the viewer is turned facing out from the elevated level of the portal opening—these figures do, however, appear as if they have their feet on the ground in an upright position.

A second set of soffit figures similarly "support" the figures on the third archivolt as they are depicted in an atlas-type pose, signaling their physical strength. The row of figures on the frontal face of this third archivolt is more difficult to identify iconographically, but visually, they repeat the pattern and number correlation of the figures on the archivolt above them. Generally referred to as Holy Men because of their halos,[15] these twenty-four figures are arranged in conversant pairs, one holding a book, while the other holds a phial. Like the seated position of the Elders, the static upright stance of these Holy Men makes them appear immobile, but their repetition along the molding of the soffit creates a rhythmic pattern. The combination of the position of these figures' feet and the upheld hands of the Atlas figures under them causes the two sets of images to be linked in a dependant relationship. This practice of carving both the frontal and soffit faces of the arch accentuates the depth of the sculpture and reiterates the radial configuration of the program, thereby emphasizing a visual reading that moves across the multiple planes of the composition from the outside in to the center, or vice versa, like the spokes of a wheel connecting to the hub. In this case, the hub, or ring around the dark, vacuous center, is defined by a set of animal/human figures on the

[15] Tcherikover, *High Romanesque*, pp. 57–61.

inner-most arch. Like the animals on the outer molding, these composite figures inhabit the elaborate tendrils of the intertwined foliage and are arranged "head-to-tail" following the curve of the arch.

In programs like this at Aulnay, one acknowledges that the individual images within any given archivolt might well be identified according to standard iconographic analysis, given certain attributes, gestures, or poses. These individual identifications do not, however, constitute what we would normally consider a comprehensive program. Given the piecemeal iconography, it is difficult to recognize a single unifying narrative or overarching didactic message within these compositions. Comprehension as such can only be intuited—quite literally—by reading between the lines of the individual arches. Moreover, even the structure of the architectural format works against this type of programmatic reading. The radial arrangement and replication of the individual images carved on each voussoir distorts or negates the sense of a linear progression inherent in the telling of an episodic story or the narration of a chronologic history.[16] Compounding this static reading, the void at the center of the sculptural space—that space otherwise occupied by the tympanum in the more familiar portal programs of the Romanesque—creates a gap or silence where one would expect the directive of a subjective image. This void serves to circumvent the dominant voice necessary for the conveyance of a singularly dogmatic message. The example of Aulnay speaks to the need to readdress the significance of the tympanum-less portals within a more situated context and with an acknowledgment of the cultural environment in which individuals likely experienced and comprehended them.

Ritual Space, Perceptual Space, Conceptual Space

I would argue that the underlying reason that these elaborate sculptural systems seem so confusingly ornamental, and have therefore come to be described as overtly decorative,[17] lies in the fact that the analysis of

[16] Later programs shift their figural orientation from the radial pattern to a more linear pattern where the figures stand upright, but conform to the shape of the arch. See the catalogue in Boss-Favre, *La Sculpture Figure*, pp. 445–463; and Tcherikover, *High Romanesque*, pp. 137–167, who calls this phase Proto-Gothic and dates it to 1130–1140.

[17] The "decorative" disignation applies to all but the most figural compositions considered in Boss-Favre, *La Sculpture*; and Tcherikover, *High Romanesque*. Kendall, *The*

the sculptural surface has been artificially disconnected from both its architectural frame and its lived experience. Where a programmatic meaning does not appear to be possible in the study of the imagery in isolation, nor is it readily evident in the analysis of the supporting architectural form, it can, I believe, be more fully realized following a triadic approach to spatial analysis proposed by Henri Lefebvre in *The Production of Space.*[18] Lefebvre integrates the examination of the "perceptual space"—the visual space of sign, symbol, and language—into and alongside the analysis of the "conceptual space" of the architectural frame and the "ritual space," where one comes to understanding experientially.[19] In the case of the archivolted programs, Lefebvre's model facilitates the understanding of the sculptural ornament within the analysis of the architectural form as it is practiced ritually by the individual devotee. It allows us to approximate the integrated visual, auditory, and kinetic experience that devotee would have had while moving through this three-dimensional space.

In general, the analytic disjunction of the archivolt's ornamentation from its ritual perception and its architectural setting seen in previous studies has served to de-contextualize our modern reading. Importantly, this disjunction has also obscured the substantial contribution made by the layout and organization of sculptural ornamentation to that compelling sense of movement felt and understood in the underlying architectural configuration. In this separation we are no longer able to perceive what would have been seen, felt, or internalized in relation to the lived experience of the ritual preformed within these spaces. Like Lefebvre, my goal here is to "bring together the vari-

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Allegory, p. 140, concludes his analysis of some of these programs by saying "these nested archivolts . . . made up of repetitive animal, floral, or geometric patterns . . . are no doubt purely decorative." The exception to this treatment would be the iconographic work of Meyer Schapiro, in *Romanesque Art* (New York: G. Braziller, 1977); and the more contextual approach of Seidel, *Songs of Glory*.

[18] Lefebvre, *Production*, pp. 38–39.

[19] Edward Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory*, (London: Verso, 1989); Edward Soja, "Thirdspace: Expanding the Scope of the Geographical Imagination," in eds. D. Massey, D. Allen, and P. Sarre, *Human Geography Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999), pp. 260–278, describes Lefebvre's divisions as "First Space," which is empirically measurable and mappable; "Second Space," which is subjective, imagined, and imaged; and "Third Space," which is lived space. Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (London: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 31–40 calls Lefebvre's Third Space, *Place*, and defines it as constructed by people doing things; never finished, but are constantly being preformed; and where the structure of subjectivity is founded.

ous thoughts contributing to the production [of this space] and the modalities of [its] genesis within a single theory or inventive mode."[20]

Incorporating the experience of the ritual or communal performance, where a "system of symbols is enacted, dramatized and materialized,"[21] highlights a process of perception that, in this case, methodically and deliberately leads the viewer to the visually empty space of the open, tympanum-less portal where the sight gives way to internalized sensations. The three-dimensionality of the space serves to expand the liminality of the open void at the threshold to facilitate an understanding that defies the cognitive and embraces feeling, emotion, and intuition.[22] This three-dimensional sense of liminality is the embodied experience of Victor Turner's transitional stage. He sees this phase as the void; the space "betwixt and between." It is the experience that transforms the universal experience of the short journey into a meaningful, individualized rite of passage; a graduated process toward personalized revelation.[23]

As suggested at the start, our initial experiential reintegration of the lived perception of the archivolt's program of imagery with the conceptual frame of the architectural unit revealed that the spatial configuration—the concave formation of upward leading steps and telescoping arches—dictated an active, or moving, reading pattern in toward the portal opening following the footsteps of the viewing devotee. This experience also illustrated that, by way of their radial arrangement around the center void, the individual voussoirs were complicit

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[20] Lefebvre, *Production*, p. 16, points to the phenomenon of spaces produced by the rituals performed within them, More than their constitutive parts, their status as objects of study lies not in their physical attributes, but in their "being seen, heard, felt, experienced, spoken and represented." Like Merleau-Ponty, "Eye and Mind," in *The Primacy of Perception*, ed. J. Eddie (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), p. 184, I see the space within an archivolted portal as revelatory in that it illuminates a "path proceeding from the primacy of perception" to the phenomenology of experience, where "what is visible or experienced in viewing is *Being*" (my emphasis). See also. Martin Heidegger, "Origin of the Work of Art," in *Philosophies of Art and Beauty, Selected Readings* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), who assigns a supreme role to art in human experience; and Hora Bratu and Ileana Marculescu, *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 37/3 (1979), pp. 335–349.

[21] Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory Ritual Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 31.

[22] This is the stance of Neuroarthistory as stated by Norman Bryson in John Onians, *Neuroarthistory: from Aristotle and Pliny to Baxandall and Zeki* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 1.

[23] Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1969), p. 94.

in moving the reader's eye into the tympanum-less space at the center of the composition—the place of entry at the threshold.[24] From this I would suggest that not only was the viewer's motion an essential element in the physical practice of the architectural space, but it was also complicit in the visual comprehension of the ornate imagery. In fact it was the movement that allowed the viewer to link the various visual referents presented on the individual archivolts, thus bringing them together in reference to that viewer's personal understanding of the space in relation to its previous ritual employment. As a working hypothesis, we can point to motion as the active mechanism linking the conceptual, the perceptual, and the lived experience of these spaces. By accommodating all three fields of Lefebvre's triadic analysis, I wish to use the still- relevant experiential understanding of the space as my springboard for an investigation that challenges the traditional disciplinary boundaries through its broadened scope. This investigation involves the exploration of reading, hearing, seeing, feeling, and thinking in an effort to come to terms with the medieval understanding of these visual spaces and demonstrates how these ecclesiastical structures illustrate a contemporary way of looking and reading founded in a worldview and cultural environment that was both active and interactive, therein exposing a specifically medieval approach to the visual presentation of intellectual and philosophical material.[25]

The Quadrivival Motion of Medieval Diagrams

In the Middle Ages the concept of motion was known intellectually by way of the ancient discourse of the Quadrivium.[26] Within the interaction of the contributing disciplines—Mathematics, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy—motion was understood in terms of its relational and

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[24] Creswell, *Place*, pp. 19–22, theorizes the difference between place and space.

[25] Jeffrey Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché, *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 3–11, signal the disjuncture in medieval studies by way of the primacy given to the text over the "universal" theological experience as a result of postmodern deconstruction.

[26] This knowledge system assigned a meaning to each of these categories: math was concerned with numbers and shapes, rather than calculations; geometry included the study of geography and subjects that fell under the heading of earth measurement; music had little to do with performance, but rather with a theory of harmonics and modes; and astronomy dealt with the movement of the stars and heavenly bodies. See Jim Tester, *A History of Western Astrology* (Suffolk, Boydell Press, 1987), p. 102.

proportional properties—that is, as a function of pattern, rhythm, and number. Motion was thus the common denominator underlying the four aspects of the Quadrivium. In their writings about various components of the Quadrivium, medieval ecclesiastical philosophers, such as Isidore of Seville, and the Venerable Bede, incorporated motion as a property of the two-dimensional, painted diagrams used to illustrate their understanding of the interrelated nature of these intellectual and philosophical ideas.[27] Motion was used to bridge the gap between the formal abstraction of the logico-mathematical space of the concepts being related and the practico-sensory realm of reading and comprehension. I want to suggest that in a manner similar to these manuscript diagrams, the archivolted portal programs employed motion to stimulate an experiential reading and an intellectualized understanding. The philosophic origins of motion as an aid in the reading of the two-dimensional diagrams is therefore instrumental to our modern reading of the three-dimensional sculptural compositions.

Medieval diagrams could take a variety of forms—trees, ladders, angels—but the circle was one of the most versatile as it could address a broad range of already familiar concepts.[28] (fig. 14.6) Following

[27] Harry Bober, "An Illustrated Medieval School-Book of Bede's 'De Natura Rerum'," *Journal of the Walters Gallery* 19–20 (1956), pp. 65–97; Barbara Obrist, "Wind Diagrams and Medieval Cosmology," Speculum 72 (1997), pp. 33–85; and Celia Chazelle, "Christ and the Vision of God: The Biblical Diagrams of the Codex Amiatinus," in *The Mind's Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages*, eds. Jeffery Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 84–111. See also John Murdoch, *Album of Science: Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (New York: Scribner's and Sons, 1984); Bruce Eastwood, *Astronomy and Optics from Pliny to Descartes: Texts, Diagrams and Conceptual Structures*, Collected Studies Series 291 (London: Variorum Reprints, 1989); and Patrick Gautier Dalché, "De la glose à la contemplation: Place et function de la carte dans les manuscripts du haut moyen âge," *Testo e immagine nell'alto medioevo*, Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano de Studi sull'Alto Medioevo 41 (Spoleto: Presso la sede del Centro, 1994), pp. 693–764.

[28] Harry Bober, "In Principio: Creation before Time," in *Essays in Honor of Edwin Panofsky*, ed. Millard Meiss, De Artibus Opuscula 40, 2 vols. (New York: New York University Press, 1961), pp. 13–28; Léon Pressouyre, "Le cosmos platoncien de la cathédrale d'Anagni," *Mélanges de l'Ecole Française de Rome: Moyen âge* 78 (1966), pp. 551–93. Lucy Sandler, *The Psalter of Robert de Lisle* (London: Harvey Miller, 1982), includes the illustrations of later versions of these types of diagrams such as the Harmony of the Seasons, the correlation between the Micro and Macrocosms, the Ten Ages of Man, the Virtues, and even the Creation. Mary Carruthers, "Moving Images," p. 295, in her discussion of various diagram forms, makes note that medieval authors were frustrated by the "immoveable" nature of their two-dimensional diagrams and that in the later Middle Ages there is evidence for *rotae* diagrams made

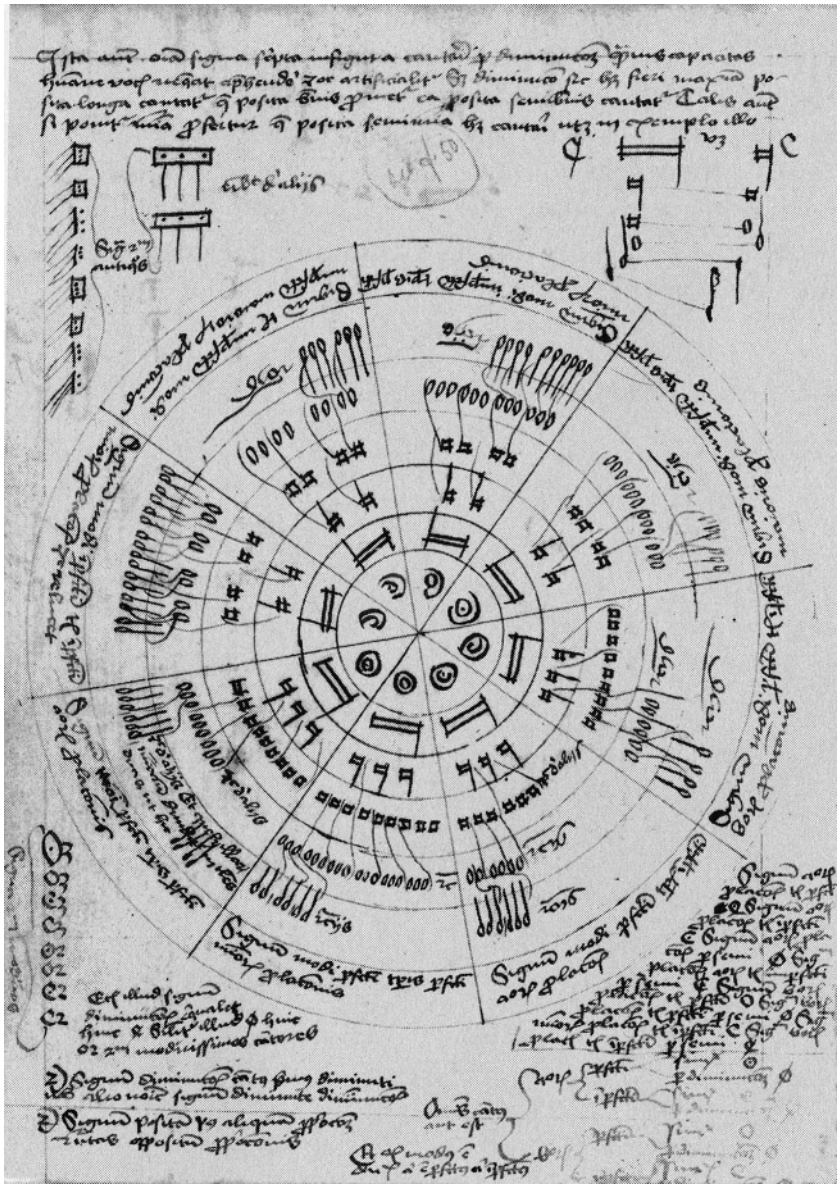

Fig. 14.6 Anonymous XI, circle with menstrual system, British Library, Add. MS 34200, fol. 36v, after Berger, p. 109, fig. 13. Photo: with permission of the British Library.

Aristotle's textual description in *Meteorologica* II.6, the circular format allowed individual ideas to appear visually complete, while facilitating their schematic amplification or reduction with the application of concentric or overlapping circles.[29] The description of the design of these complex charts, such as that by Hugh of St. Victor (1096–1141), illustrates that they were constructed using knowledge of ancient rhetorical strategies, where division and composition were employed as mnemonic devices.[30] Manipulating the "number, location, and occasion" of any one idea within the segmenting and layering of the geometric form facilitated the juxtaposition of diverse ideas for both comparison and contrast. For modern analysis, this "incessant re-elaboration of implicit knowledge"[31] indicates not only what categories of data were considered essential for the reader to know, but also importantly, what material was not necessarily made explicit within the accompanying text. (figs. 14.7, 14.8)

Similarly, medieval poets, such as Goeffrey of Vinsauf in his *Poetria Nova* (*c*. 1210), have been shown to have often had a circular structure in mind in their basic *formae*.[32] Stimulated by a sense of intellectual puzzle-play, the data within their written poetic compositions was meant to be read through various combinations of the multifaceted

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of cut-out parchment disks tied onto the page so that the parts could be physically manipulated.

[29] Barbara Obrist, "Wind Diagrams," pp. 33–85, illustrates many of these types of circular diagrams. See also Madeline Caviness, "Images of Divine Order and the Third Mode of Seeing," *Gesta*, 22/2 (1983), p. 104; Elaine Beer, "Nouvelles Reflexions sur l'image de Monde dans la Cathedrale de Lausanne," *La Revue de l'Art* 10 (1970), pp. 58–62, who discusses these ideas in relation to the geometric forms found in a rose window.

[30] Hugh of St. Victor, "The Three Best Memory Aids for Learning History," trans. Mary Carruthers, in *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, eds. Mary Carruthers and Jan Ziolkowski (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), p. 36; and Sandler, *Psalter*, pp. 23–27. The bibliography on medieval rhetoric is extensive. In general, see James Murphy, *Medieval Rhetoric: A Select Bibliography* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989). The idea here comes from Consultus Fortunatianus, *On Memory*, which is translated by Jan Ziolkowski, in *The Medieval Craft of Memory*, Appendix, p. 296. For the use of these memory devices in the service of music, see Anna Maria Busse Berger, *Medieval Music and the Art of Memory* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), pp. 51–81, figs. 2–13.

[31] Obrist, "Wind Diagrams," p. 34.

[32] Mary Carruthers, "The Poet as Master Builder: Composition and Locational Memory in the Middle Ages," *New Literary History* 24 (1993), pp. 881–905. See also Geoffrey of Vinsauf, *Poetria Nova*, trans. Margaret Nims (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967) and Marjorie Curry Woods, "A Medieval Rhetoric Goes to School and to the University," *Rhetorica* 9 (1991), pp. 55–65.

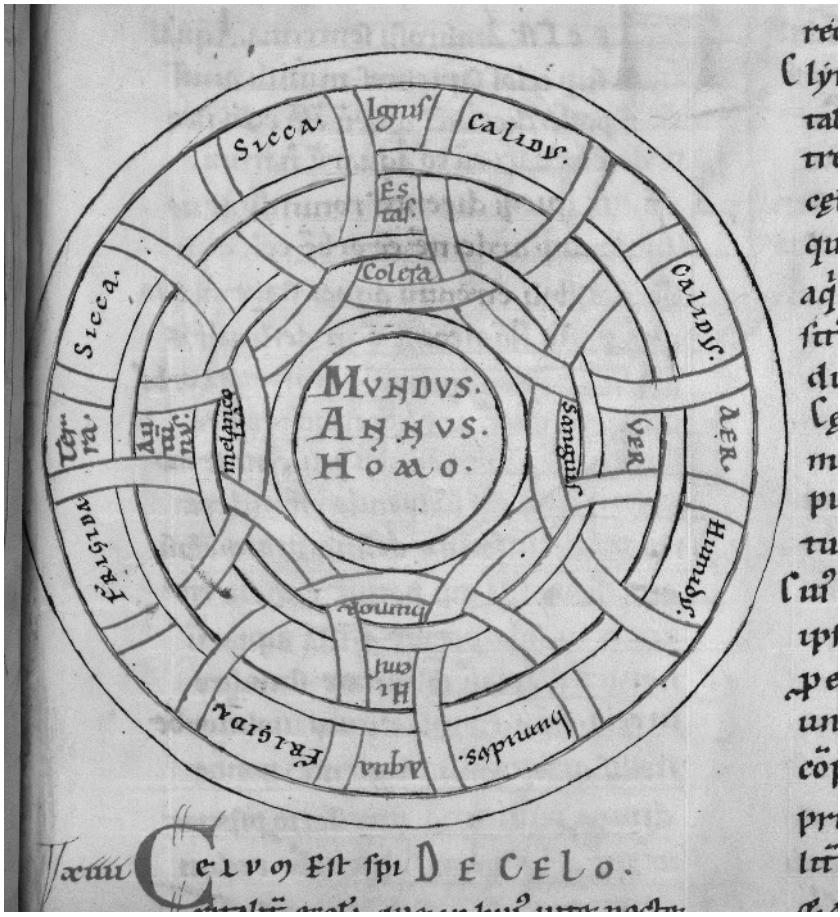

Fig. 14.7 Mundus-Annus-Homo diagram, Isidore of Seville, *De Natura Rerum*, 8th century, BL Harley, MS 2660, fol. 37, after Edson, 1997, frontispiece. Photo: with permission of the British Library.

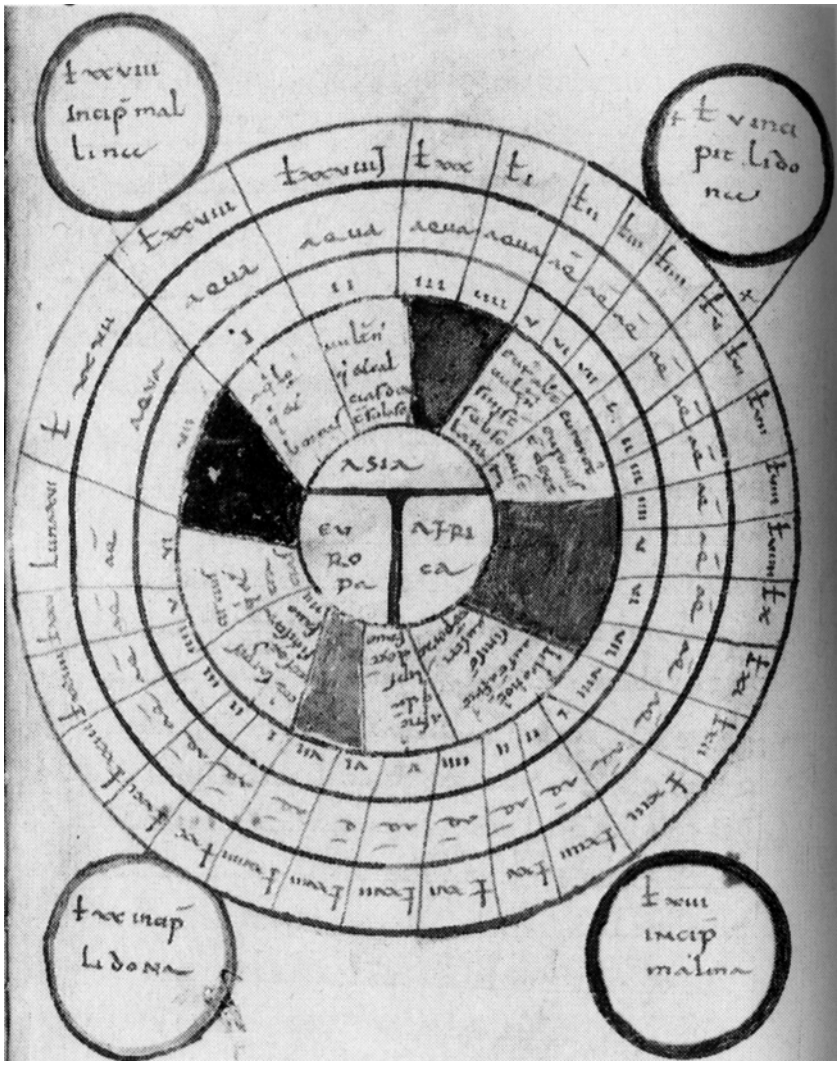

Fig. 14.8 Tide Movements in Expanded T-O plan, 9th century, Fleury, Britsh Library, MS Harley 3017, fol. 135r, after Edson, 1997, p. 68, 4.4. Photo: with permission of the British Library.

components. Comprehension came from creative correlation of spatially configured fragments.[33] By implication, this way of thinking or processing data can also be seen to be fundamental to the process of visual reading and the comprehension of diagrammatic material.

On the monumental scale of the archivolted portals, it follows that the arrangement of repetitive, rhythmic imagery, like that arrangement of data on the two-dimensional diagrams, might well have been composed in such a way as to be read in terms of multi-dimensional relationships between segmented parts. The significant difference between the manuscript diagrams and the configuration of the portal sculpture is, of course, the third dimension. As such, our analysis of the portal's operational strategies should necessarily expand to include the addition of its spatial qualities. With the experiential understanding that the viewer's own movement would have contributed to the comprehension of this third dimension, I would suggest that the underlying goal of the designers of these complex sculptural/architectural programs was a particularly physical understanding of the ideas and concepts sculpturally depicted on and within them. Moreover, given that these monumental programs were the product of a complex social matrix based on the ecclesiastical phenomena of pilgrimage, crusading, and cult of saints—all of which relied on human movement and processional rituals to expand the liturgical space,[34] I believe that the archivolted portal programs would have been understood as a conceptually oriented mapping of time and space. Functioning kinetically, these programs were intended to move the spiritually motivated viewer to a tangible understanding of his/her own personalized path to Salvation by situating the inspired visual and spiritual revelation within the physical act of entry. The foundation of this three-dimensional application relies

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[33] Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 137–138, demonstrates that this sort of intellectual deciphering was not only an integral part of a medieval education in reading and writing, but was introduced at the most basic levels, suggesting that even the minimally educated would have been familiar with the idea that both reading and composition were operations of manipulation, organization, and integration. See also Carlo Ginzberg, *Wooden Eyes: Nine Reflections on Distance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), pp. 3–21; Carruthers, "Moving Images," pp. 290–291, 302; and Marjorie Curry Woods, "The Teaching of Writing in Medieval Europe," in *A Short History of Writing Instruction*, ed. J.J. Murphy (Davis: Hermagorus Press, 1990).

[34] Lizette Larson-Miller, *Liturgy: A Book of. Medieval Essays* (New York: Garland Publications, 1997), p. x.

on the understanding of motion derived from a medieval Christian reading of ancient astronomy.

Astronomical/Cosmological Motion

In the Middle Ages, society was informed by the combination of such theories holistically; theology, scholastic thought, astronomy/cosmology, mathematics, and music were all perceived as connected and dynamic. At the core of these was Aristotelian/Platonic cosmology, which in effect helped to orient all of these principles under one overarching worldview.[35] It is interesting to note that while we acknowledge that a great deal of the Aristotelian astronomy was filtered through the Islamic court schools of medieval Spain,[36] we are at the same time alerted to the western pursuit of a more first-hand knowledge by way of illustrations such as that of a monk observing the stars through a primitive telescope. (fig. 14.9)

The most important observation to be taken from Aristotle's astronomy in the understanding of the archivolted portals is the centrality of the property of motion, which was based on two primary principles.[37] First, is the fact that motion was never spontaneous; it had to be initiated by a mover. Second, that there were two opposing types of motion—natural motion and forced motion.[38] Where natu-

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[35] Although access to the whole of Aristotelian material is a source of contention among medieval scholars, its influence should not be discounted given the cross-cultural exchanges taking place in Spain in the time period when the earliest and least figural programs—that is those programs that have been the most difficult to come to terms with iconographically—were being constructed. The geographical and political proximity suggests that those responsible for these buildings' sculptural programs may well have been familiar with Arabic thought and an Islamic aesthetic. See Jerrilynn Dodds, *Architecture and Ideology in Early Medieval Spain* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Press, 1989), pp. 83–94; and Susan Havens Caldwell, *The Introduction and Diffusion of the Romanesque Projecting Single-Portal Unit in Northern Spain* (Ph.D. diss., Cornell, 1974).

[36] E. Edson and E. Savage-Smith, *Medieval Views of the Cosmos: Picturing the Universe in the Christian and Islamic Middle Ages* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2004), pp. 24, 30.

[37] Friedrich Solmsen, *Aristotle's System of the Physical World: A Comparison with his Predecessors* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1960), chapters 12–13; David Lindberg, *The Beginnings of Natural Science: The European Scientific Tradition in Philosophical, Religious, and Institutional Context, 600 B.C. to A.D. 1450* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 62.

[38] Aristotle, *On the Heavens*, I.3, IV.1–4, ed. and trans. W. Guthrie (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953).

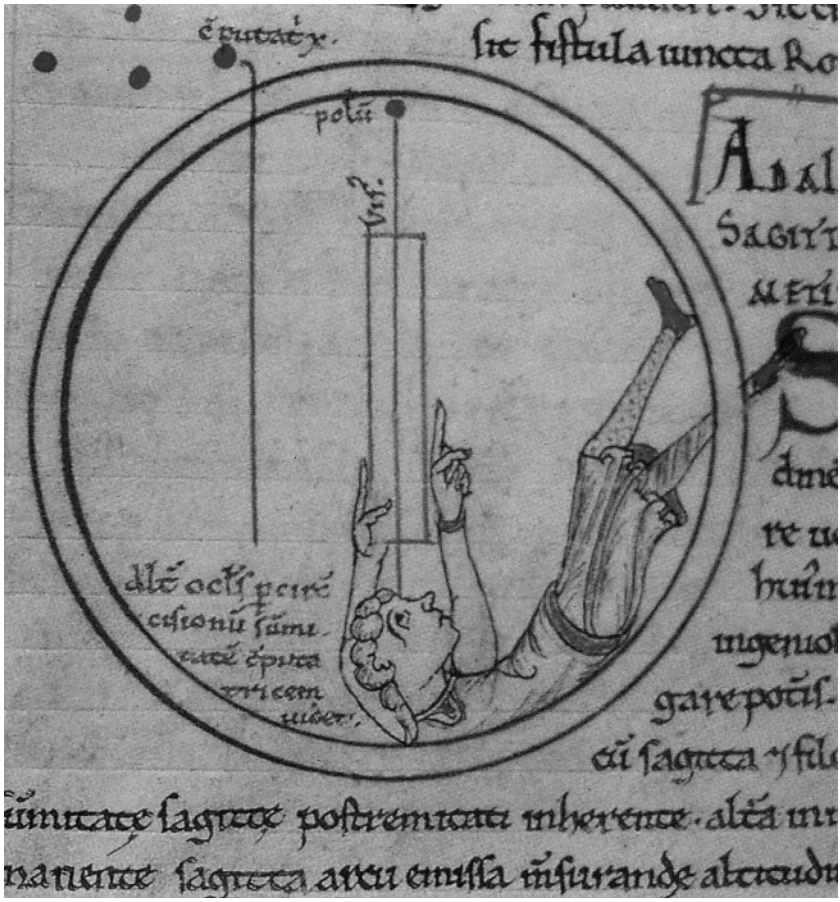

Fig. 14.9 The Practice of Astronomy, 12th century, Bibliothèque municipale d'Avranches, MS 235, fol. 33v. Photo: after Deceneux, p. 38, with permission of Bibliothèque municipale d'Avranches.

ral was defined as the action that took place within an ideal spherical arrangement of the elements, forced motion required an external force to make a celestial body violate its natural tendency. The medieval understanding of Aristotle's forced motion included the possibility that this motion could be generated, alternated, augmented, or corrupted.[39] Natural motion was conversely thought to bring moving bodies toward an ideal spatial arrangement of concentric circles that was dictated by the orderly configuration of the celestial spheres.[40] In Aristotle's view, the directional tendency of the moving body was dependant on the proportion of the elements in the composition. Within the hierarchical ordering of the heavens, motion in the highest or central celestial sphere was different from those below it; the center was incorruptible and incapable of qualitative change. This center was the ideal space. It was there that a body in natural motion reached its natural place; the center was where all motion ceased.[41] Defined as circular, this center was delimiting by nature.[42] Eternally uniform, and a changeless perfection, the center encompassed the primal force—the mover.[43]

Scholars of this material remind us that the "science of the Middle Ages was an integral part of a philosophical outlook [that was] enlarged by insights derived from religious beliefs."[44] As a consequence, one of the philosophical settings where the scientific thought of the Greeks

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[39] This aspect of Aristotle was known in the West through Calcidius' early-fourth-century translation of Plato's *Timeaus*, and is very different from our post-seventeenth-century reading of Aristotle, which reduces all manifestations of motion to variations of "local motion." See John Murdoch and Edith Sylla, "The Science of Motion: The Role and Scope of Motion in Medieval Natural Philosophy," in *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. David Linberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 206–264. These principles come from Aristotle's "Meteor" 1.2. See Tester, *History*, pp. 114–115; and Richard Bosley and Matin Tweedale, eds., *Aristotle and His Medieval Interpreters* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1991).

[40] Aristotle's system for this cosmology is illustrated in Bibliotèque Nationale, MS lat. 5280, fol. 20r.

[41] Lindberg, *Beginnings*, pp. 58–62.

[42] Obrist, "Wind Diagrams," p. 75. The delimiting factor of the circle was sometimes reinforced by a circumscribing image of the Godhead—"the all-embracing Divine Spirit." See Stanislaus Grabowski, "God 'Contains' the Universe: A Study in Patristic Theology," *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa* 26 (1956), pp. 9–13, 165–187.

[43] Aristotle, *On the Heavens* I.6 and *Physics* IV.8, in *Aristotle: Complete Works*, ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). See also Herbert Schuller, *The Idea of Music: An Introduction to Musical Aesthetics in Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1988), pp. 55–68.

[44] William Wallace, "The Philosophical Setting of Medieval Science," in *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. David Lindberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), pp. 91–119.

emerged was in the realm of cosmological poetry.[45] Within this poetry we see cosmological motion conceptually conveyed in a circular format similar to that in the illustration of Aristotle's cosmology. Boethius, a fifth-century poet (*c.* 480–524), divided corporeal existence into four conditions: number, time, space, and motion.[46] Correspondingly, he saw that there were four progressive steps to liberate the eye of the soul from corporeality—Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy. In this schematic movement he looked to Aristotle and defined the divine as that which was central and devoid of matter and motion. This divine Being—both the state and the object—was at once attractive and seductive, and thus the vacuous center was seen not only as divine, but also as the "object of desire."[47]

In a similar vein, Macrobius' fifth-century poem, *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, describes the journey of the soul down through the hierarchy of celestial spheres on its way to join the body.[48] Incorporating Aristotle's ideas on movement, Macrobius' soul acquires a "motion of desire" as it descends.[49] In medieval Christian terms, the activation of this desire was recognized as the manifestation of God's causal energy.[50] As such, desire came to be understood as both a motion and an emotion. Desire was what caused human beings to move and be moved toward Salvation, and as the object of that desire, God was central. Like Aristotle's "Prime Mover," God was perceived to be unmovable, invisible, and infinitely stable.

Looked at in relation to this philosophical/theological adaptation, the archivolted portal compositions, with their three-dimensional, circular orientation around the centralized void of the open portal, can

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[45] F.J.E. Raby, *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1934); and Michael Lapidge, "A Stoic Metaphor in Late Latin Poetry: The Binding of the Cosmos," *Latomus* 39 (1980), pp. 817–837.

[46] Boethius is following Pythagoras, Euclid, and Ptolemy. See Gerard O'Daly, *The Poetry of Boethius* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), p. 11.

[47] Henry Chadwick, *Boethius: The Consolations of Music, Logic, Theology, and Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 73; Titus Burckhardt, *Mirror of the Intellect: Essays on Traditional Science and Sacred Art*, ed. and trans. W. Stoddart (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987), p. 79; Lindberg, *Beginnings*, p. 62.

[48] Macrobius, *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, ed. and trans. William Stahl (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952/1990), pp. 133–137; William Stahl, *Martianus Capella and the Seven Liberal Arts*, 2 vols., (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971/1991); Edson and Savage-Smith, *Medieval Views*, p. 51.

[49] Macrobius, *Commentary*, pp. 237–243; Tester, *History*, pp. 118–119.

[50] Evelyn Vitz, *Medieval Narrative and Modern Narratology: Subjects and Objects of Desire* (New York: New York University Press, 1989), pp. 176–211.

be seen to represent, both visually and experientially, a monumental expression of the Christian understanding of this ancient scientific philosophy. As such, the organizational strategy underlying the composition of the archivolted portals was designed to physically convey the sense of an unknowable divinity in the open void of the portal, and the combination of the descending gradation of the concentric archivolts and the upward assent of the portal steps was meant to signify a metaphorical movement toward the perfection of Salvation. If indeed this is the intended understanding of the archivolted form, then we have to consider how the sculpted imagery functioned within that three-dimensional plan. With the recognition that these elaborate layers of images were to be processed by a moving viewer, the analytical question then becomes how was the visual employed in that dynamic act of comprehension? With what operation of language did this vortex of visual imagery speak?

The Language of Motion

Substantial research exists on how visual imagery was processed and comprehended during the Middle Ages, particularly with respect to the convergence of the visual and the auditory. Thanks to the work of Madeline Caviness and others we have come to recognize that there was more than one mode of visual language.[51] Titus Burckhardt's study of language identifies two such modes that are particularly relevant in terms of the visual language employed within the archivolted programs.[52] He calls these "imaginative language and auditive language." Importantly, he suggests that the difference between them is the level of intuition necessary for their comprehension. By Burckhardt's definition, the development and use of imaginative language relied on the idea that every word can be represented by a corresponding image. Words name things that can be seen and are evoked through the production of mental images. This language system is familiar to us because it is typical of the logical linear thought process that has come to dominate the modern Western world. For art historians, it is the mode of language we rely on for a straightforward iconographical analysis.

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[51] Caviness, "Images of Divine," pp. 99–120.
[52] Burckhardt, *Mirror of Intellect*, pp. 225–240.

Auditive language, on the other hand, is based on the act of making a sound. In this sense, the auditive is commonly compared with a musical expression, which in the Middle Ages was considered "knowledge without logos" and "intrinsically intuitive."[53] Within an auditive system things are conceived of as determinations of sound, where the nominative identifies the act, action, or object of the sound that produced it. In the sense that these words are a product of the verb to be, auditive words, and the imagery they invoke, are always in the act of becoming. Viewed, therefore, in terms of their function or activity in a current of time, ideas suggested by auditive words are conveyed intuitively through their basis in motion and are enhanced by a sense or perception of rhythm and repetition. It follows, therefore, that the images invoked through the auditive were similarly conveyed through a sense of motion and were meant to be perceived quite differently from the relative stasis of the mental images indicative of imagined language. Auditive imagery was understood to be kinetic, and therefore inherently moving.[54]

Under this auditive rubric, aniconic, geometric, or even foliate imagery taken as decorative within an "imagined" system of language, has been shown to be implicitly meaningful.[55] This is relevant given that many of the archivolted programs include aniconic and geometric ornamentation. It is, therefore, important to consider the possibility that this imagery, far from being simply decorative, actually played a contributing role in the perceived meaning of the sculptural program. When read in relation to the compelling movement conveyed by way of the architectural configuration, the employment of imagery that functions on this intuitively kinetic level can be seen to be both purposeful and deliberate.

An example of this kinetic function of the imagery can be seen in Saint Pierre de Aulnay's south transept portal, (fig. 14.5) where the individual images within any one arch when isolated from one another appear static and virtually identical to those before and after them on a particular arch. Their arrangement, however, following the radiating

[53] Fadlou Shehadi, *Philosophies of Music in Medieval Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1995), pp. 42–52 notes that the auditive is also indicative of the language of the Arabic world. This becomes interesting as the broad geographical scope of the corpus of the archivolted portals includes territory in Spain directly confronted by medieval Islam.

[54] Burckhardt, *Mirror*, pp. 238–240.

[55] Oleg Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), pp. 178–194 and, in general, Oleg Grabar, *The Mediation of Ornament* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

pattern of the voussoirs, one after another in succession, creates an illusion of repetitive pattern that serves to convey the sense of rhythmic movement. Comparatively, this flurry of moving imagery stands in a stark contrast to the empty void at the tympanum-less center. The opposition of the positive movement of the sculpture to the negative stasis of the portal opening, allowed these portal configurations to function like a vacuum—an invisible gravitational pull funneling the moving devotee in toward the interior. As such, the ornamental sculpture did not exist to fill a void—it was not decorative in the sense of a horror vacuii—but rather, this imagery can be said to have played a corroborative role in the action of the portal composition's negative center. Serving at this level to accentuate the three dimensionality of the configuration, the play of undercut and overlain forms along each of the archivolts acted in progressive stages to undermine the solid stability of that architectural form. Seeming to dissolve into the open void at the core of the composition, this sculpture highlighted the center's "unknowable nature," yet another reference to the essence of Aristotle's prime mover.

This contrast between solid and void as a philosophical concept was another idea, like auditive language, that is contextually more readily associated with the Arabic courts of medieval Spain.[56] Where we have seen that the void in the Christian West, particularly in poetic literature, could signify God's unknowable nature and was indicative of his causal energy,[57] in the context of Islam, the concept of the void was similarly treated as significant and meaningful. In both the art and literature of Islam, God and His revelation were not identified with any particular place, time, or object, but rather His presence was understood to be ubiquitous; He was everywhere.[58] Metaphorically, this understanding was expressed as a sense of vast emptiness. A gap,

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[56] Seyed Hossein Nasr, "The Significance of the Void in Islamic Art," *Islamic Art and Spirituality* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 189. Here again this is relevant to the analysis of the archivolted programs because of these program's cross-cultural origins and their geographical proximity to the source of these ideas.

[57] Vitz, *Medieval Narrative*, pp. 176–179; Elizabeth Sears, "The Iconography of Auditory Perception in the Early Middle Ages: On Psalm Illustration and Psalm Exegesis," in *The Second Sense*, ed. Charles Burnett, Michael Fend, and Penelope Gouk (London: Warburg Institute, 1991); Herbert Kessler, *Spiritual Seeing: Picturing God's Invisibility in Medieval Art*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), pp. 92 and 129; Ginzburg, *Wooden Eyes*, pp. 63–65; and Paul Finney, *The Invisible God: The Earliest Christians on Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 275–279. These ideas are explored in greater depth in Abel, "Three-Dimensional Voice."

[58] Terry Allen, *Five Essays on Islamic Art* (Manchester: Solipsist Press, 1988), p. 33.

a pregnant silence, or a significant negative space were all taken to represent a manifestation of the sacred, while the contrast between the solidity of the positive form and the negative space of the void referred directly to the uniqueness of God's creative power.

It is in this sense that the opening at the center of the tympanum-less composition cannot be said to have been without meaning. More than simply the space of entry, this particular void was the destination of a liminal journey.[59] The telescoping pattern of the program's imagery mirrored the progressive action of the steps, thereby joining forces to extend the metaphorical and physical dimensions of the transition at the threshold, its culmination of which was marked by the negative space at the center. In this reflective contrast of the positive action of the imagery and steps in relation to the negative stasis of the portal opening, the devotee's intuitive understanding of the transitional journey, was metaphorically reiterated in the contrast between the cyclical pattern of time and the linear motion of human life. In this the physical journey within the space of the portal reflected the conflated notion of time conveyed in the Salvation narrative. Like the metaphorical understanding of the light that streams through the eastern windows of a church perceived to be the metaphysical essence of the divinity, the seemingly complex meaning entailed in the architectural form and ornamentation of the portal configurations might well have seemed abstract when perceived in isolation. But when the portal configuration was employed as a stage or backdrop to processional rituals the perceptions would have been communally reiterated. During these moving events lay participants would have physically followed the cleric's motions while visually recording the spectacle, interpreting both in relation to the words of the liturgical oratory preformed at the portal.[60]

Mapping Temporal Motion

For the medieval Christian, the physical understanding of entry as both temporal and spatial was derived from the simultaneous creation

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[59] Victor Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press 1978).

[60] The spectacle that takes place at the portal is addressed in, Mickey Abel, *Open Access: The Archivolted Portals of Northern Spain and Western France within the Theology and Politics of Entry*, under contract with Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

of time and space as described in Genesis.[61] Treated as present, timeless, and cyclical, the medieval preoccupation with the issues of time and space are generally associated with that presented in the liturgy.[62] But this Christian concern with time can also be found in Isidore of Seville's *De Natura Rerum* and Bede's *De Ratione Temporum.* Both texts represent an effort to bring the scientific knowledge of the ancients into the understanding of Christian theology.[63] Temporal issues, such as the six ages of man, were aligned with the geographical divisions of the known world, thereby rendering these concepts within a spatial configuration; a reconciliation that facilitated the seeing of Salvation as a temporal phenomenon.[64] This correlation lent itself to a graphic presentation where temporal reflections of the Biblical narrative could be conveyed by way of the geometric form of a map or diagram.[65] Like the astronomical diagrams described above, these charts were also placed at the beginning of the text, where they were used to clarify the relation between various interrelated ideas. Of Isidore's schematic diagrams, the T-O map, which consisted of a "T" enclosed in a circle, functioned most effectively in the conveyance of time and space.[66] (fig. 14.10) As

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[61] Lizette Larson-Miller, *Medieval Liturgy*, p. x. David Lindberg, *Beginnings*, p. 198, discusses the reconciliation of Platonic cosmologies to the account of creation in the book of Genesis in terms of an "elucidation," where science played the role of the "handmaiden" to theological issues.

[62] Edson, *Mapping Time*, pp. 38–46.

[63] Tester, *History*, p. 126. In this Bede drew on Lucan, Virgil, and Macrobius, as well as early Christian writers such as Eusebius, Jerome, Orosius, Augustine, and especially Isidore of Seville. See also Donald Wilcox, "The Sense of Time in Western Historical Narratives from Eusebius to Machiavelli," *Classical Rhetoric and Medieval Historiography*, ed. Ernst Breisach (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1985), pp. 167–237.

[64] Jacques Fontaine, "Isidore of Seville et l'astrologie," *Revue des etudes latines*, 31 (1954), pp. 271–300; and M. Laistner, "The Western Church and Astrology during the Early Middle Ages," *Harvard Theological Review*, 34 (1941), pp. 215–275. Isidore's ancient sources were Lucretius, Capella, and Cassiodorus. He contrasts these with the Christian material drawn from Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory the Great. See David Lindberg, in "The Transmission of Greek and Arabic Learning to the West," *Science in the Middle Ages*, ed. David Lindberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), p. 158.

[65] Edson, *Mapping Time*, pp. 38–46.

[66] There were seven diagrams, including a Wheel of Egyptian Months, an Annus diagram, a Rota of Zones, a Cube of Elements, an Annun-Mundus-Homo diagram, a Planatary Rota, a Wind Rota. These configurations are also found in ninth-century manuscripts of Cassiodorus's second book of the *Institutiones.* See R. Mynors, *Cassiodori Senatoris Istitutiones* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1937), pp. xxx–xxxix; F. Troncarelli, "Alpha e acciuga: immagini simboliche nei codici de Cassiodoro," *Quaderni medievali* 41 (1996), pp. 6–26. These diagrams are illustrated in Obrist, "Wind Diagrams," p. 50.

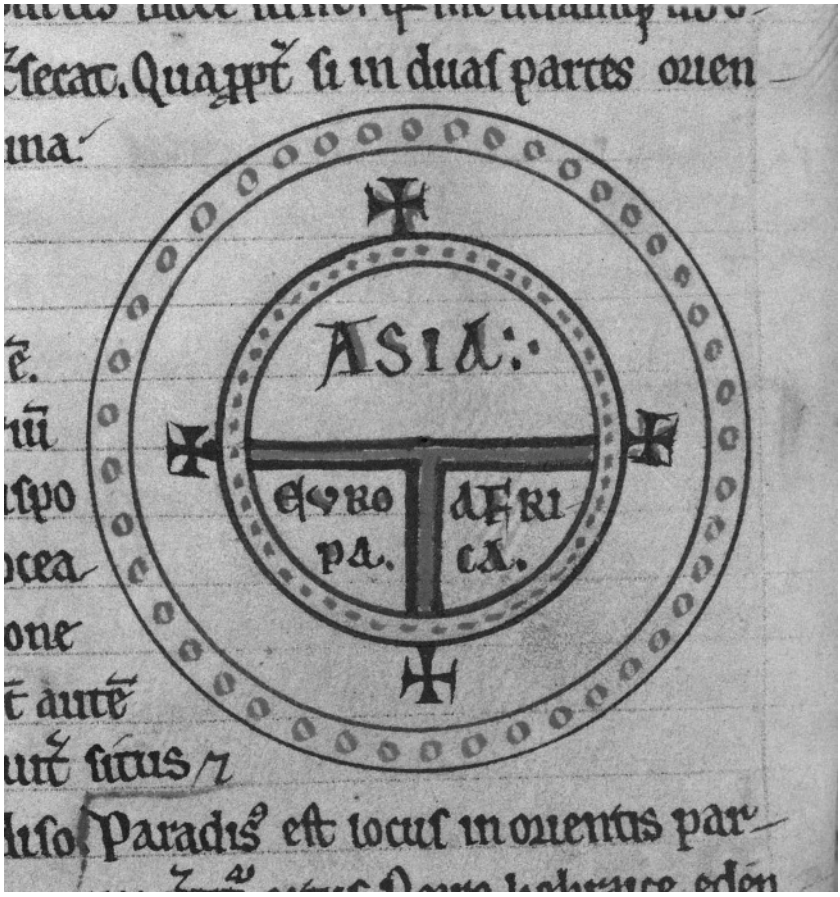

Fig. 14.10 World Map, T-O plan, Book XIV.2, Isidore of Seville, *Etymology*, 10th century, BL MS Royal 6.C.1 fol. 108v. Photo: British Library.

a shorthand indication of the earth as the center of a celestial system, the round format of a T-O diagram supported the time/space relationship by acknowledging the cyclical repetitions of natural time.[67] In

In addition to those included in texts by Isidore and Bede, similar diagrams based on the T-O plan used by Gautier de Châtillon (8th C.), Beatus (11th C.), Guillaume de Conches (11th C.), Macrobius (12th C.), Gautier of Matz (13th C.), and others are illustrated in, *Mappemondes: A.D. 1200–1500*, Marcel Destombes ed., Monumenta Cartographica Vetustioris Aevi I (Amsterdam, N. Israel, 1964).

[67] Referring to this property, Bede says, "In order to talk reasonably about time, we must frequently remember the circles and zones, whether they be equinoctial, summer solstice or winter". Edson, *Mapping Time*, p. 94.

spatial terms, the upper portion of the T-O configuration represented the geographical east, the center of which was the Holy Land, while the division of the bottom portion separated the northern Caroligian empire from the southern African or the pagan cultures outside the realm of Christianity.

It is the focal point—the point where the vertical upright of the "T" and its cross member come together—that is particularly interesting to us in terms of the archivolted portal configurations. Within the manuscript diagrams this point represented the entry into the Heavenly Jerusalem, which was accessed through the earthly Holy Land.[68] Geometrically, this point does not refer to a point on a line or a flat plane as it would appear in a two-dimensional drawing, but rather it was an indication of the center of a spherical projection connecting with a point on its circumference, the line connecting them being the diameter.[69] Signifying the geographical intersection of the known world with that of the spiritual celestial kingdom, the point of convergence on the T-O plan—that point bisecting the diameter at the center of the sphere—highlighted the moment in time where the timeless prelude, of Eden—or that time before creation—met the age of man, after the Fall and the introduction of sin and death as a time-limiting factors.[70] In connecting the heavenly world with the earthly reality, these diagrams simultaneously connected the natural time of the cosmos with the spatial division of the earthly realm. In doing so they depicted the inseparable coordinates of the medieval world. Created simultaneously and ending together at the Last Judgment, the beginning and end of time were placed within the controlling limits of human life as it conformed to Salvation history.

As medieval philosophers, theologians, cartographers, and poets sought an avenue to correlate the known world—the places and spaces of historical significance—with past Biblical events, they used the T-O organizational format to facilitate and support a "spatial understanding of things, concepts, conditions, processes, and events including

[68] P.D.A. Harvey, *Medieval Maps* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), pp. 19–24. For an explanation of a zenith and a diagram of the tympan or tablet of an astrolabe that shows the position of the zenith just above the center of a circle, see Richard Kay, "Dante's Empyrean and the Eye of God," *Speculum* 78/1 (2003), p. 49, fig. 5.

[69] Edson and Savage-Smith, *Medieval Views*, p. 12.

[70] Edson, *Mapping Time*, pp. 37, 157.

celestial and imagined cosmographies."[71] The annotations embedded in the map/diagram, such as the short inscriptions which appear in the center circle of ninth-century wind diagrams clarified the interacting relationship between heaven and earth,[72] and accommodated the geographical delineation of history.[73] The historical/theological significance of the correlation understood in this centered point thus provided the otherwise flat diagram with a sense of temporal depth that literally moved beyond the two-dimensional surface of the page.

Yet as Evelyn Edson shows, the diagrammatic presentation of the biblical narrative as depicted within a T-O map tended to distort the progressive quality of time, causing the events to appear to take place simultaneously. Similarly, the tightly configured structure of the Roman liturgy separated the sanctorial cycles so as not to detract from the linear, time-based program based on Salvation history. This allowed the two notions of time to co-exist, emphasizing the cyclical repetition of time as a part of the lived experience.[74] The two perceptions of time were then conflated in the individual's memory.[75] This view highlights the dilemma of time that early Christian writers such as Bede and Isidore were attempting to render with their diagrammatic depictions; that is, the correlation between the astronomically circular notions of Aristotelian space and motion, and the progressively linear notions of Christian Salvation history.[76]

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[71] Edson, *Mapping Time*, p. 15.

[72] In these diagrams the words *kocmoc* (cosmos), is written vertically, and is intersected by the horizontal word *mundus* (world), thereby signifying the point of convergence similar to that within a T-O map. (I refer the reader to Barbara Obrist's text for illustrations of this type of diagram.) See Obrist, "Wind Diagrams," pp. 44–47, fig. 5. Natalia Lozovsky, "Roman Geography and Ethnography in the Carolingian Empire," *Speculum* 81/2 (2006), pp. 325–364, discusses medieval uses of the historical annotations accompanying Roman maps.

[73] Orosius, (5th century) characterized this correlation as "…viewing [events] as from a watchtower, first I shall describe the world itself which the human race inhabits, as it was divided by our ancestors into three parts and then established regions and provinces, in order that when locale of wars and the ravages of diseases are described, all interested may more easily obtain knowledge, not only of the events of their time, but also of their location." Orosius, *Seven Books of History against the Pagans*, trans. Irving Raymond (New York: Columbia University Press, 1936), p. 30. Edson, *Mapping Time*, pp. 16, 31, 95–96, suggests that there was a map which accompanied Orosius' original text and that this is a description of that map.

[74] Rose Walker, *Views of Transition: Liturgy and Illumination in Medieval Spain* (London: British Library, 1998), pp. 72–76 and Walker, "Wall Paintings," p. 203.

[75] Amy Remensnyder, *Remembering Kings Past: Monastic Foundation Legends in Medieval Southern France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), p. 35.

[76] Bernard Silvestris, (1085–1178), in *The Cosmographia*, trans. Winthrop Wetherbee (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), pp. 89–90, saw the dual nature of time

It is at this level of mental projection and memory that I would argue that the open-archivolted portal programs incorporate both circular and linear notions of time. Building on the dual nature understanding implicit in the two-dimensional diagrams, the archivolted program's three-dimensional approach promoted both the cyclical and the linear conveyances of time as simultaneously physical realities and mental projections. The cyclical understanding would have been conveyed by way of the imagery within the concentric, semi-circular composition of archivolts—especially those with the symbols of the Zodiac or the Labors of the Months. Simultaneously, the linear would have been sensed in the axial sequence of the steps up and through the portal toward the altar in the east. Depending on the contextual surroundings and the viewing individual's perception, the particular sense of time could therefore have been perceived as either the agrarian's cyclical notion—based on a lived experience with the natural world—or the Bible's linear sequencing—based on the teachings associated with the building itself.

Hypothetically, if we were to superimpose a monumental T-O diagram onto the semi-circular form of the archivolted configuration, (fig. 14.11) the point of passage into the Heavenly Jerusalem would correspond to the focal point slightly above human eye-level at the center of the dark, semi-circular opening of the portal. When the individual devotee made his or her way up the portal steps to cross over into the expanse of the interior, this *zenith* would signify the point of transition where man's exterior secular cognition was to be transformed by the revelation of sacred knowledge within the interior.[77] Adapting Aristotelian motion to Christian theology, the temporal depth created by the teleological action of the ascending steps, paired with the descending arches, defined man's natural path inward through the open portal where desire was to be fulfilled by the promise of Salvation

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as a "returning upon itself, [where] time may be seen to be rooted in eternity, and eternity to be expressed in time." See also, Brian Stock, *Myth and Science in the Twelfth Century: A Study of Bernard Silvestris* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972). Tester, *History*, pp. 128–129, shows that Bernard looked to Saint Augustine (384–430), whose ideas were contrasted with the agrarian cyclical time based on the length of shadows, height of the sun, and position of the stars, in that it was not necessarily an objective measurement. According to Karl Morrison, *Conversion and the Text: The Cases of Augustine of Hippo, Herman-Judah, and Constintine Tsatsos* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1992), p. 30, Augustine's ideas were a "subjective distention of the mind into the past by memory, and into the future by anticipation."

[77] Kay, "Eye of God," p. 49, fig. 5.

Fig. 14.11 Overlay of T-O map and Gourvillette, France, west façade. Photo: author.

and the act of temporal reunion. The addition of the geometric third dimension facilitated by the architectural configuration, therefore, allowed the sculptural designers to portray the passage of time in an experiential format quite different from the discursive or metaphoric presentation possible through the simple combination of language and image as found on the two-dimensional diagrams.

Moving through Geographical Time

Within the two-dimensional T-O plan the elaboration of the temporal matters was facilitated through the inclusion of additional circular bands.[78] (fig. 14.8) With this expanded form, these diagrams make reference to Plato's cosmological model from the *Timaeus*, where the celestial bodies are placed in concentric orbits around the terrestrial

[78] Edson, *Mapping Time*, p. 73 and fig. 3.5.

world.[79] Taking his cues from Plato, Macrobius, in his fifth-century *Commentary*, preserves the two avenues of motion that I contend are at play in the archivolted portal configuration. One of these paths was found in his rendition of the *thema mundi*. Essentially illustrating the "birth-chart of the creation,"[80] Macrobius described this path of motion in terms of a circular zodiac, where he placed the beginning of time in Aries, following the mythology. This same astronomically based, circular telling of time is depicted in many of the more elaborate archivolt programs.[81] In at least twenty-one separate archivolt programs, the entire year is compressed in a semi-circle zodiac in the outermost archivolt. January is placed on one end of the arch, December falls on the other, and Cancer the Crab, representing the summer solstice, sits at the apex.[82] Interestingly in terms of the archivolted portal configurations, the typical east/west orientation of medieval churches, with the portal situated on the western façade, facilitated the reading of the semi-circular archivolts in either a north to south or a reversed south to north pattern, thus reflecting the ancient rendering of the ascending and descending nodes.[83] This orientation places the zodiac sign for January in the north and that for December in the south, and thereby aligns the cyclical movement of time with the concrete coordinates of the earthly realm.

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[79] Plato, *Timaeus and Critias*, trans. Desmond Lee (London: Penquin Books, 1965), pp. 42–53. In Macrobius, the outer rings are meant to suggest belts of atmosphere (*orbis aeris*). See Macrobius, *Commentarii in Sommium Scipionis* 1.22.8–13, ed. J. Willis (Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1983) and Macrobius, *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio* ed. W. Stall (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952), pp. 181–184.

[80] Macrobius, *Commentarii*, as cited in Tester, *History*, pp. 118–119.

[81] The archivolt programs with zodiacs are catalogued by theme in Boss-Favre, *La sculpture figure*, pp. 445–461.

[82] Seidel, *Songs of Glory*, p. 53, when suggests that archivolts containing images of The Labors of the Months or the Zodiac may be "intended to illustrate the geographical location of Jerusalem" and "that the carved calendrical system assumes the shape of a circular map." Tester, *History*, p. 104, argues that zodiacs such as those on synagogue floors, are not always astrological, but simply "schematic images of time."

[83] Before the *Timaeus*, the idea of circular paths can be traced to ancient Babylonian mythology where, in the "Epic of Creation," where Marduk, the solar god, split Tiamat, the dragon, "like an oyster" lengthwise and set her up arched over the world. In this way fixing the year and defining the days, Marduk then set his own planet at the equinox in Aries, designating it as the beginning. Placing the ecliptic caused by the split of Tiamut's head and tail, between the northern and southern stars, he caused the new moon to shine in the west and formed the astronomical concept of the ascending and descending nodes. See Tester, *History*, pp. 120–122.

Similarly linking the movement from north to south with a passage of time, a set of tenth- and eleventh-century diagrams, accompanying a Computistical Miscellany, places a *mundus* (earth), configured as a rectangle, at the base of three concentric circular paths, which relate the three courses of the sun.[84] It has been noted that the introduction of the square (rectangle) in relation to the circle allows this type of diagram to symbolize both the surface of the earth as well as the world in its spatial extension.[85] The correlation of the earth with the movement of the sun serves to anchor the earth by way of its coordinates, but because this earth is configured as rectangular rather than square, it signals a perceived difference between the relatively short distance between north and south and the elongated span between east and west. This perception is significant in terms of a Christian interpretation of the diagrammatic data, but is particularly interesting in relation to its correlation with Salvation history and the archivolted programs.

In the layering of astronomical movement over the stationary base of the earth, the corners of the retangular *mundus*/earth as depicted on the Computistical diagram, are aligned with the cardinal directions.[86] If we correlate this diagram with the archivolted portal configurations, and align (fig. 14.12) the north/south orientational reading of the archivolts with the coordinates of the *mundus*, its cardinal points defined by the courses of the sun, the rectangular form of the *mundus* replicates both the generalized form and orientation of the typical Christian basilica—that is a rectangular enclosure with an axial alignment defined by a portal at the western end and a directional orientation toward the altar in the east. The significant difference again between the portal configuration and the diagram is the experiential benefit of the three-dimensionality of the architectural form, which allows the rectangular form of the building itself, and its monumental semi-circular sculptural program, to be understood in relation to both the cyclical motion of celestial time and the earth-bound movement through geographical space.

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[84] Obrist, "Wind Diagrams," pp. 57–59, cites Strabo, *Geography* 1.2.28 as the source.

[85] Obrist, "Wind Diagrams," p. 63.

[86] Edson, *Mapping Time*, p. 87. See also Kendall, *Allegory*, pp. 142–144.

MVNDVS
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LVNA
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LVNA

through the spheres in a linear trajectory on its way to join the body. It was Plato who initiated this idea, as he assigned each successive celestial orbit in his concentric configuration a decreasing ratio of light, as well as a musical tone in a descending pattern. The contrast and change in the sonic or temporal qualities signaled the complex characteristics of sonorous motion, but as a whole, Plato's musical scheme created a representation of celestial harmony.[89] Boethius defined this harmony as a theory of unity, where harmony is the "making one of multiplicity" and the consent of dissident elements.[90] With this as their justification, Christian theologians, such as Augustine, used rhythm as the unifying element in a program of musical harmony.[91]

Augustine understood that the movements of the soul were revealed by the senses and were the result of the emotions of desire, joy, fear, and sorrow.[92] And because of its power over the senses, he believed that the resulting emotional reaction to music could be linked to an underlying textual message, thereby working to make the Word compelling. In a similar manner to the way the threshold of the portal configurations represented the liminal transition between the earthly and spiritual

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[89] Charles Scillia, "Meaning and the Cluny Capitals: Music as Metaphor," *Gesta* 27/1 and 2 (1988), pp. 133–135.

[90] See Henry Chadwick, *The Consolation of Music, Logic, Theology, and Philosophy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 77. Boethius and Martianus Capella (*c.* 425) were the primary sources for the study of music in the Middle Ages. See Theodore Karp, "Music," *The Seven Liberal Arts in the Middle Ages*, ed. David Wagner (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), pp. 169–195. See also Boethius, *De institutione musica, Source Readings in Music History*, trans. Oliver Strunk (New York: Norton, 1950), p. 50. Boethius divides music into three categories: *Musica mundane, Musica humana, and Musica istrementalis.* Cassidorius (*c.* 485–585) went further in seeing the concepts of music and cosmological harmony as so intertwined that "all things in heaven and on earth share in the discipline of music." As Pythagoras (429–347 B.C.E.) attests, the universe was "founded by, and can be governed by, music." Cassidorius, *De Musica*, 2, as quoted in Scillia, "Meaning and the Cluny Capitals," p. 135; and James McKennon, *Music in Early Christian Literature* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 4.

[91] Employed to intensify and heighten the significance of the liturgy, rhythm was believed to preserve the spirital meaning of the ornamenting words because it was perceived in a cadence unnatural to normal human speech. See Peter Jeffery, *Re-Envisioning Past Musical Cultures: Ethnomusicology in the Study of Gregorian Chant* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 96.

[92] Augustine recognized the emotional response created through music as both an effective and affective method of conversion; music not only energized the soul, but had the power to turn or move the soul toward God. Augustine in *Confessions* X, pp. xxxiii, 49–50: *PL* XXII, pp. 799–800; *CL* XXVII, pp. 181–182. See also Karl Morrison, *History as a Visual Art in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 1–38.

worlds, Augustine believed that the platonic notion of affinity would allow theologians an avenue to control the sensual power of music, while harnessing its useful qualities. Thus music came to be seen as a ladder for spiritual ascent.[93] In this sense music's structural elements were effective in that they facilitated the incremental movement from the external sensual excitement of the ornamental exterior to the calm of the interior's spiritual quiet. Here too music was employed to move the soul to the eternal silence of God. The ultimate object in this type of intellectual pursuit was the form of Being itself.

Expanding on this affective quality, music, like other aspects of the Quadrivium, was more fully explored for its effective qualities within the Arabic courts of medieval Spain. There, amplifying the Greek system, Al-Farabi (*c.* 870–950) showed that the harmonic organization of Plato's celestial cosmos[94]—the contrast, change, and repetition in the musical patterns of tone, interval, and rhythm—was not only qualitative but also relational. Moreover, it was the relationship between these properties that caused or created the motion.[95] In this, effective motion was generated through the correlation between aesthetically pleasing harmonic sounds made by the heavenly spheres in their cyclical orbits and the hierarchically descending numerical order of the spiritual

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[93] Brian Stock, *Augustine the Reader: Meditation, Self-Knowledge, and Ethics of Interpretation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), p. 10, suggests that Augustine used the platonic notion of a ladder between the terrestrial and celestial spheres as a model for meditative reading—to move from the lower realms of ceaseless desire and the uppermost changeless realm. Shehadi, *Philosophies of Music*, p. 8, links Al-Farabi to Augustine in seeing the potential of music as the intermediary between the terrestrial world and celestial spheres. Boethius, who was otherwise skeptical of sensual perceptions, saw images and shapes as this type of ladder in that they helped lift the imagination. In this he found that "the order and rationale observable in music affords a mirror to the similar order and rationale of the entire universe." Man must eventually pass beyond this imagery and kick away the ladder in order to think wholly in terms of intellectual concepts. See Chadwick, *Boethius*, p. 214; Karp, "Music," p. 172

[94] Al-Farabi saw motion as essentially a numerical process, but with a significant and useful aesthetic component. Al-Farabi was translated by Gundissalinus between 1130–1150, but his work was accessible to the West through the intellectual courts of Islamic Spain. See Brian Stock, "Science, Technology," 14; and Murdoch and Sylla, "Science in Motion," p. 215. Gerbert of Aurillac is cited as a source of transmission of this type of Arabic science. See Marco Zuccato, "Gerbert of Aurillac and a Tenth-Century Jewish Channel for the Transmission of Arabic Science to the West," *Speculum* 80/3 (2005), pp. 742–863.

[95] In a celestial scheme, harmony was created by the relative distance and ratio of the motion of the planets. See Jeremy Yudkin, *Music in the Medieval Europe* (New York: Prentice Hall, 1989), p. 22.

cosmos. Motion in the highest celestial sphere was incorruptible and incapable of qualitative change; it was therefore quantitatively different from each of the spheres below it. The lesser spheres endeavored to imitate the changeless perfection of this center sphere by assuming eternally uniform circular motions.[96] In this program the more ordered and rhythmic the pattern, the more harmonic the character of the movement. This proportional correlation allowed Al-Farabi to highlight motion as the inherently effective property of music; music had the power to energize the soul.[97] He separated the movement music created into two modes, interestingly similar to the two modes of language identified by Burckhardt. Music's earthly, surface mode was meant to move the senses and induce a state of sensual ecstasy through tone, interval, and rhythm.[98] Unfettered by this type of surface ornamentation, the goal of the interior, celestial mode was to lift the spirit to a state of quiescence.[99] As such, music could be both effective in its sensual stimulation and affective in its movement of the soul.

Like Augustine and Boethius, Islamic philosophers elevated the production of music to the celestial sphere, believing that God created music as a cosmological form of his own speech. It was through the sensory perception of music that it was possible to listen to God's Word.[100] Importantly, they recognized that like the correlation between the architectural form and the sculptural ornament of the archivolted portals, the more affectively moving qualities of music were carried in its underlying form—not on the surface decor.[101]

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[96] Lindberg, *Beginnings of Natural Science*, pp. 58–62.

[97] Al-Farabi is said to have surpassed Pythagoras' mathematic philosophy by incorporating the thought of Aristoxenus (*c.* 400 B.C.E.). See Shehadi, *Philosophies of Music*, pp. 8–15, 43, 51, 66. McKennon, *Music in Early Christian Literature*, pp. 2–4, 154, n. 352, notes that Tertullian, Ambrose, and Augustine were all against the study of music unless it was taught as an element of the Liberal Arts curriculum following the thought of Plato, Aristotle, and Pythagoras.

[98] Coker, *Music and Meaning*, pp. 38–39, notes that while the ear orients man to his spatial and temporal setting, it also gathers, transmits, and transforms the motion of sounds into afferent impulses within the brain where they are interpreted. The resulting response gives way to emotion and thought.

[99] Shehadi, *Philosophies of Music*, pp. 158–159. Aristotle disagreed with Pythagoreans on the issue of the sound emitted by the heavenly bodies. He thought the idea was beautiful and poetic, but absurd, since a principle feature of these bodies was their silence. See Chadwick, *Boethius*, p. 79.

[100] Shahadi, *Philosophies of Music*, p. 10.

[101] Shehadi, *Philosophies of Music*, p. 10.

Geometry: The Form of Motion

As for music, it was early Christian philosophers who believed that music was effective because it presented the overlay of language in its normal syntactic progression. Authors and composers saw that rather than music capturing the content of the language as meaning, it was the vehicle to move the language.[102] Comparing the rhetorical relationships in literature and music illustrates a similarity in their vertical and horizontal rationalizations.[103] While the horizontal is read through the syntactical arrangement of the overlay of ornament and was related to the more earth-bound realm of human speech, the vertical relationship was realized in the rhythmic harmony and equated to the celestial hierarchy. The horizontal indicates the plane of existence or nature, whereas the vertical is the plane of spiritual contemplation.[104] Music theorists of the medieval West suggested that this underlying structure could take on one of two tonal or harmonic shapes, which are formed by the tendency of sonic qualities to move from or toward one another.[105] The melodic shape was a succession of single tones that formed a linear trajectory or horizontal line. Melodic line, particularly in medieval chant, often took the shape of an arch—that is, a characteristically low beginning that ascends and then returns to a low ending to give a sense of completion and repose. Harmonic shape, on the other hand, was seen as the simultaneous succession of sets of tones, sounding at once to form a chord. Crossing disciplines, it is interesting to note that a chord is geometrically defined as a segment whose end points lay on a circle—in other words an arch not unlike those that comprised the three-dimensional form of the portal configuration.[106] The tension, or inherent tendency toward motion, was felt in

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[102] Thrasybulos Georgiades, *Music and Language: The Rise of Western Music as Exemplified in Setting of the Mass*, trans. Marie Gollner (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 11–13.

[103] Mark Bonds, *Wordless Rhetoric: Musical Form and the Metaphor of the Oration* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press 1991), pp. 1–12, in analyzing the rhetorical relationships in musical theory, looks at these correlations from both their vertical and their horizontal rationalizations. While the horizontal was read through the syntactical arrangement of the overlay of ornament and was related to the more earth-bound realm of human speech, the vertical relationship was realized in the rhythmic harmony and equated to the celestial hierarchy. The horizontal indicates the plane of existence or nature, where the vertical is the plane of spiritual contemplation.

[104] Bonds, pp. 1–12; Burckhardt, p. 15.

[105] Coker, *Music and Meaning*, p. 46.

[106] Yudkin, p. 62.

the intervals within the chord's arched form and another's, creating either dissonance or consonance. This inherent motion within a chord can be mathematically equated to an unbroken expanse or mass that offers greater or lesser resistance to change or motion. Thus within any given arch/chord the greater the mass, the less the motion.[107]

Bringing it all Together: Three-Dimensional Motion

In terms of our three-dimensional portal diagrams, the mathematical, the geometrical, the astronomical, and the musical notions of time and space come together in the concentric arched format. When we apply the cumulative ideas that formed the medieval understanding of the Quadrivium to the archivolted programs, we can say that each arch has both the musically harmonic, arched shape and geometrically scaled mass of a chord. Within each arch/chord, effective motion is generated through the pattern, rhythm, and repetition of the symbolic imagery. Initiated through the consonant relation of the individual sculpted voussoirs to one another, motion is increased through the relation of each arch inward to those below it as a result of the dimensioning mass of the configuration toward the center. While the outermost arch of the system has the greatest span, and thus the largest mass, it creates the least motion. Each successive arch inward quickens the momentum as that span decreases and the mass diminishes. It is, however, the collaboration of the arched form of the concentric archivolts with the upward momentum of the portal steps that replicates the dynamically moving relationship between the celestial and terrestrial bodies. Mirroring Macrobius, where the linearly descending path of the terrestrial soul passes in succession through circular orbits of the celestial spheres, the moving devotee passes though the arches of the archivolted programs one after another in a linear path toward the interior. Like the melodic shape created by the succession of single tones, the steps within the linear trajectory of this meditative viewer followed one after another. Building on the element of motion inherent in the composition's circular structure, and taking advantage of the portal's physical depth, the combination of the ascending steps and descending arches produced a telescoping spiral that funneled

[107] Tension from one chord to another creates dissonance or consonance. See Coker, *Music and Meaning*, p. 46.

into the void at the center and pulled the devotee up and through this arched configuration by the harmonic motion of the inwardly shrinking arches. Like our own 21st-century experiential understanding, this coordination of the circular archivolts surrounding a centered and upwardly linear trajectory was the pattern of motion intended to be intuitively understood by the medieval devotee. Thereby replicating the movement of music, where the linear path of the terrestrial, melodic tones are carried by the harmonically arched shape, this devotee's individualized terrestrial journey was meant to take him up and over the threshold to the vacuous opening and space of consonant repose and quiet revelation.

Manipulating both form and matter, the designers of the archivolted programs understood that affective motion could be generated through the underlying architectural structure and that effective responses were initiated through the pattern, rhythm, and tone of the ornamented surface. Realizing the potential of the Quadrivium in physical terms, these three-dimensional programs served to define, mediate, and sustain the individual's ascending path through a sanctified liminal intersection. It was there that the visually sensualized act of entry was to be experienced in terms of a passage of time equated to a cosmically structured understanding of Salvation history.

15. BODIES CONCEALED AND REVEALED IN TWELFTH-CENTURY FRENCH SCULPTURE

Janet E. Snyder

Interaction with art monuments must be a simple matter of perception. Between 1137 and 1170 church facade sculpture program design in northern Europe was transformed with a new design formula that included over life size column-figures assembled as courtiers in reception lines along the jambs. (fig. 15.1) Represented as if dressed in brilliantly-colored contemporary clothing, the column-figures seem to make eye contact with living people who approached the church. Different constituencies were given different opportunities to interact with these sculpture programs. Religious, resident, or pilgrim visitors must have interacted with these images according to their percipience. The scarcity of written documentation for the significance of sculpture produced during the twelfth century means that to understand interaction during this period, modern investigations must be experiential rather than archival. If the twelfth-century sculpted forms themselves can be accepted as documents, then it is possible to investigate how these extraordinary façade sculpture programs might have been experienced.

The clothing represented in mid-twelfth century northern French church portal sculpture programs has been the focus of much of my research.[1] The following essay rehearses and makes use of my earlier

[1] Janet Snyder, *Early Gothic Column-Figure Sculpture in France: Appearance, Materials, and Significance* (USA/ Aldershot, Hants, UK: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., forthcoming). Idem, "Cloth from the Promised Land, Appropriated Islamic *Tiraz* in Twelfth-century French Sculpture." In *Medieval Fabrications, Dress Textiles, Cloth Work, and Other Cultural Imaginings.* Edited by E. Jane Burns, 147–164 (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004). Idem, "Dress: Courtly, France, twelfth century." In *Women in the Middle Ages: An Encyclopedia.* Edited by Nadia Margolis and Katharina M. Wilson, 267–274 (Westport CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 2004). Idem, "From Content to Form: Court Clothing in Mid-Twelfth-Century Northern French Sculpture." In *Encountering Medieval Dress and Textiles: Objects, Texts, and Images.* Edited by Désirée Koslin and Janet Snyder, 85–101 (New York: Palgrave / Macmillan, 2002) Idem, "The Regal Significance of the Dalmatic: the robes of *le sacre* represented in sculpture of northern mid-twelfth-century France." In *Robes and Honor, The Medieval World of Investiture.* Edited by Stuart Gordon, 291–304 (New York:

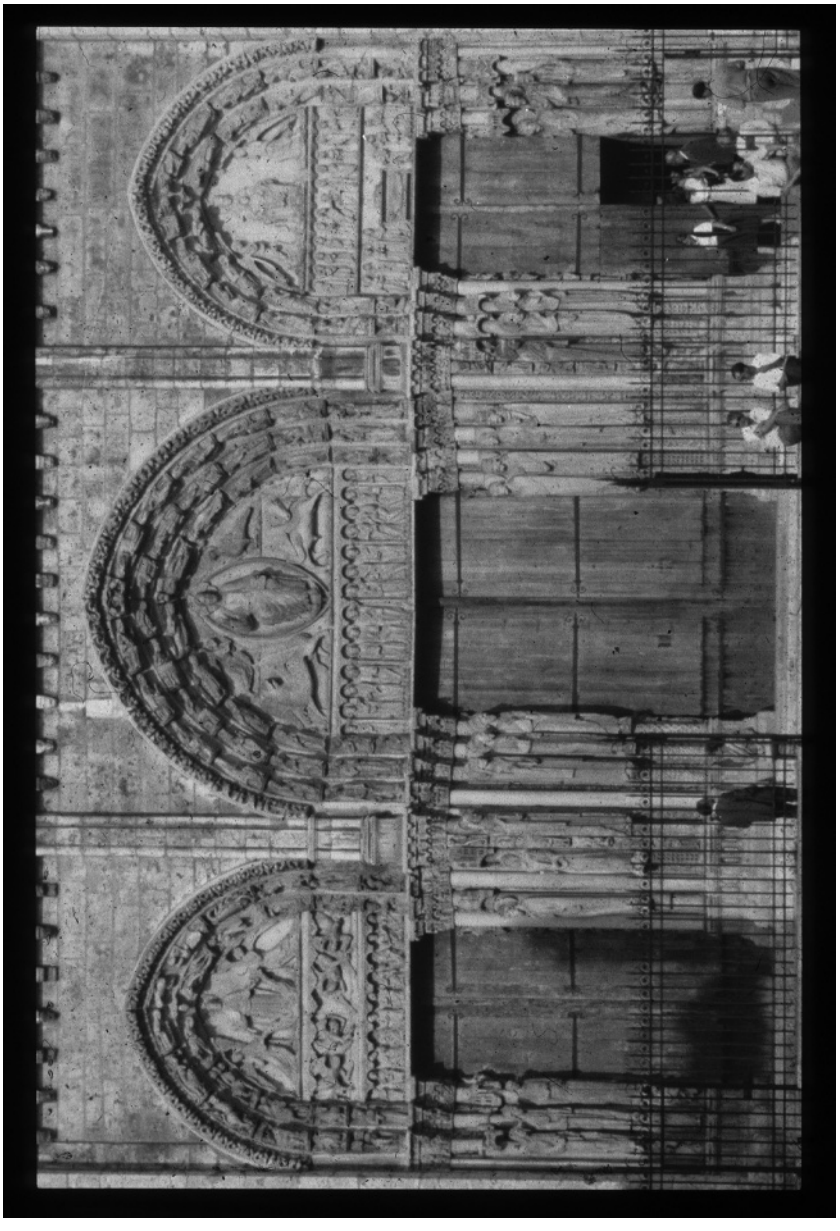

Fig. 15.1 The Royal Portal, Chartres Cathedral (view of three doorways). Photo: author.

analyses but differs from that work in that it describes the processional experience and the role actively played by the sculpture in the seduction and transformation of the visitor during the process of entering the sacred space of the church. The temporal interaction with twelfth-century French column-figure sculpture might result in a cathartic witnessing for the receptive visitor.[2] This sensational experience of the entrant arises from an individual's interactions with church portal sculpture.

The delicate beginnings of an expressed sensitivity to the form of the human body appears among individual sculpted figures of mid-twelfth century decorated church portals. (fig. 15.2) This sculpture is located in that transitional, liminal zone between the sacred space of the church and the profane world of the town, neither relegated to the exterior surface of the façade, as at Modena Cathedral, nor integrated into the vast yet intimate blue-violet interior of a church like Chartres Cathedral. Despite the static nature of stone, because of the relatively naturalistic representation of recognizable types of human beings, the sculpture may be perceived as actively participating in interactions with contemporary visitors. (fig. 15.3) An interaction between beholders and the painted, nearly-three-dimensional, sculpted human forms had a tremendous impact on those participating in the processions, whether liturgical or informal, that passed through the portal and into the sacred space of the church.

The sculpture program is perceived intellectually and verbally at the same time that it is recognized physically and viscerally. The visitor's interaction with the carvings has to do with an awareness of the individual self and also with the ability to note the distinction between sameness and difference. The modern notion of "self-awareness" is used here to mean both the recognition of one's humanity and also of

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Palgrave / St. Martin's Press, 2001). Idem, "Knights and Ladies at the Door: Fictive Clothing in Mid-Twelfth-Century Sculpture," *AVISTA Forum Journal, Association Villard de Honnecourt for the Interdisciplinary Study of Medieval Technology, Science, and Art* (Winter, 1996), 10–14. Idem, Janet E. Snyder, *Clothing as Communication: A Study of Clothing and Textiles in Northern French Early Gothic Sculpture* (PhD dissertation, Columbia University, 1996).

[2] Janet Snyder, "Bearing Witness: The Physical Expression of the Spiritual in the Narrative Cycle at Assisi." In Cynthia Ho, John Downey, Beth Mulvaney (eds.) *Finding Saint Francis in Literature and Art*, 34–45, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. This essay posits the role of the designer in modeling behavior in painted compositions and guiding the visitor through a meditation that became a personal experience of/with Saint Francis.

Fig. 15.2 Right portal, right jamb, Chartres Cathedral west façade. Photo: author.

Fig. 15.3 Left jamb, left portal, Chartres Cathedral west façade. Photo: author.

one's place in society, both appropriate for twelfth-century observers.[3] The physical form of the human body in the painted relief sculpture may have been perceived by individuals coming up to the doorway as changing in size and clarity as the figures, hazy from a distance, sharpened into focus. (fig. 15.4) These forms are more than shaped stone and arrangements of color: these easily-recognized bodies clothed in remarkable clothing signal their shared humanity with the people who see them.

People approaching the building interacted with the sculpture on diverse levels. The smaller scenes on the doorposts, capitals, and painted surfaces charge viewers with moving visually from two and three dimensions into the fourth dimension, in a passage of time. The column-figures mirror the approaching entrant, model appropriate behavior, and witness the reverent procession. Living beings ahead in the procession echo the human forms above their heads but suddenly shrink in relative size as they penetrate and disappear into the architecture. During this moment of visual integration, roles might be reversed: substantial, living people vanished into the darkness beyond the doorway as the stone column-figures stepped into the light to make eye contact, witnessing and verifying the moment of entrance for the visitor. Relief compositions on the voussoirs and doorposts anticipated perspectival scenic conventions of Renaissance painting, as in the *Labors of the Months* at Saint-Denis or at Chartres Cathedral. (fig. 15.5) The sculpture interacts with the entrant in much the same way that the perspective of Massacio's *Trinity* or Palladio's *Teatro Olimpico* activated illusion, recognizing and affirming the beholder's place in the world. The focus of the composition demonstrates there is an entrant towards whom the program is directed. (fig. 15.6) Upon entering the space defined by the raked jambs of the portal, the visitor became visually immersed in a field of textured surfaces populated by human forms, as if through one's physical entrance into the building, one entered into and participated in the living church. Believers interact with the portal program sculpture in an act of faith and testimony as they move through the portal, passing into the sacred space beyond the doorway.

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[3] Erwin Panofsky, *Renaissance and Renascences in Western Art*. The Gottesman Lectures, Uppsala University (Stockholm: Almquist & Wiksell, 1960).

Fig. 15.4 Left jamb, south lateral portal, Bourges Cathedral. Photo: author.

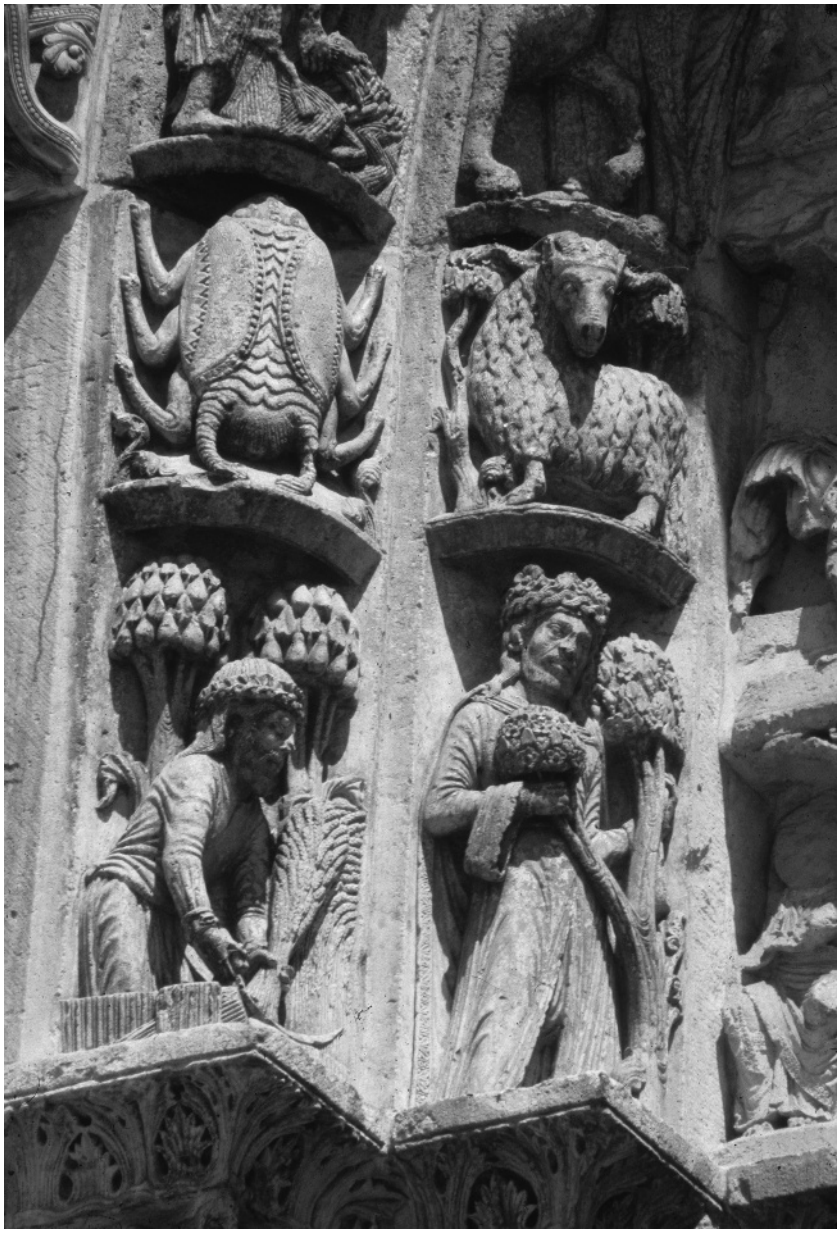

Fig. 15.5 *June* and *April, Labors of the Months*, Chartres Cathedral, west façade. Photo: author.

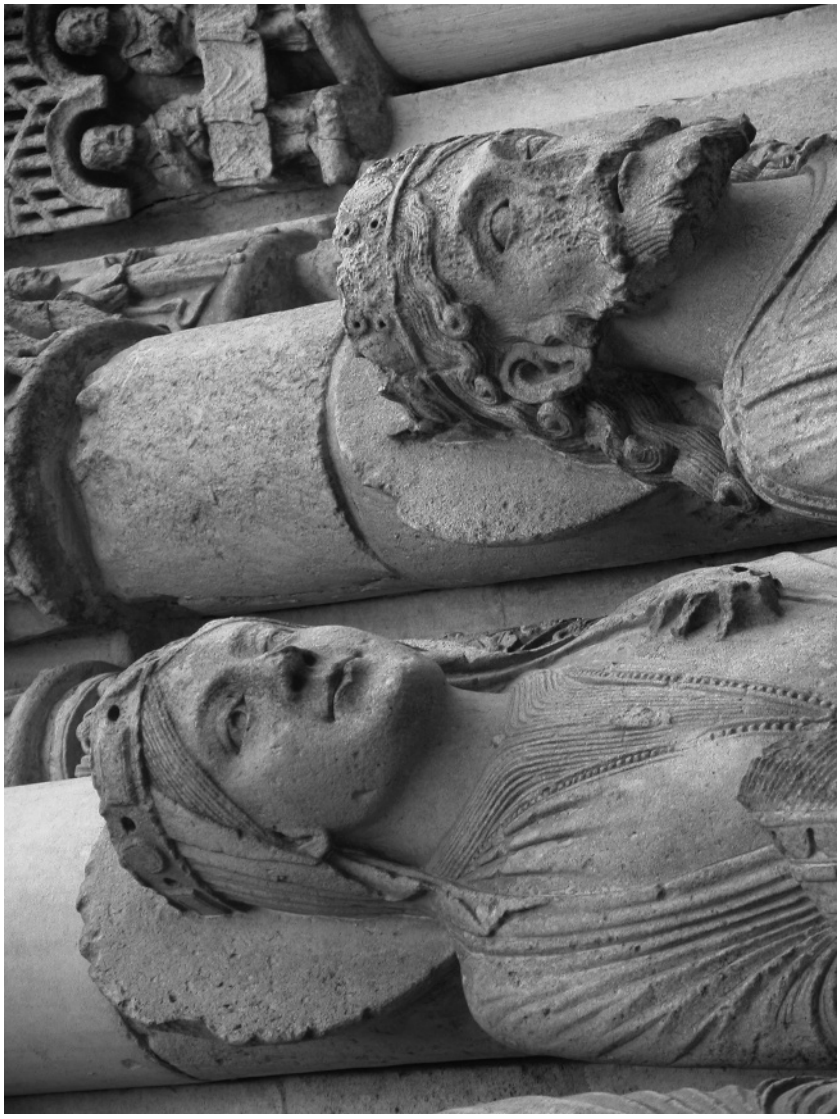

Fig. 15.6 Right jamb, center portal, Chartres Cathedral west façade (faces). Photo: author.

The very complexities of the multiple images in the portal programs intensified an observer's participation in the construction of meaning. A perceptive, knowledgeable visitor can recognize the carefully crafted components in the represented bodies and clothing of column-figures. Layers of the garments that composed the conventional clothing of men and women of the upper ranks in Frankish society are clear: the fine details of the surfaces of the relief carving advance and recede in clarity and significance.[4] The individual figures are distinguished by ensembles that disclose social position or political rank. During the twelfth century, the clothing worn by members of the elite had three parts—an undertunic (*chemise*), a belted tunic/gown (*bliaut* or *cote*), and an overgarment (*mantle*)—that were accessorized with a variety of belts, sashes, headgear, and footwear.[5] The represented accessories move the visitor to interact with the sculpture, engaging experience with perception. One's past experience of having seen the actual garments that were fictionalized and reproduced in stone enables the beholder to respond intelligently to the image, to interpret the fiction described in stone, even to compose a sequence or a narrative from the disparate parts.

As similar as the garments of column-figure men and women may be to the modern eye, closer examination of the clothing reveals how ensembles of the women column-figures can be distinguished from those of the men. Easily identified through variations on the tunic, there are three women's ensembles: matrons in cotes and ladies in the

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[4] 'Rank' refers to one's place in a social group relative to other social groups; 'status' indicates "personal attributes (including birth) that condition one's relations to other individuals, whether those within the same social rank or those in another." Kimberly A. LoPrete, "Adela of Blois: Familial Alliances and Female Lordship," in Theodore Evergates, ed., *Aristocratic Women in Medieval France* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press: 1999), 33.

[5] Jules Quicherat. *Histoire du Costume en France Depuis les Temps les plus reculés jusqu'a la fin du XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Librairie Hachette et cie, 1875, 1877); Eugene Viollet-le-Duc, Dictionnaire raisonné du mobilier française du Moyen-age IV (Paris: D.A. Longuet, N.D.); Eunice R. Goddard *Women's Costume in French Texts of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press and Paris: Les presses universitaires de France, 1927); Jennifer M. Harris. *The Development of Romanesque-Byzantine Elements in French and English Dress 1050–1180* (A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts, February, 1977. John Rylands University, 1977); Francois B. Boucher, *20,000 Years of Costume, The History of Costume and Personal Adornment* (New York: Harry Abrams, 1965); idem, *Histoire du costume en occident de l'antiquité à nos jours* (Paris: Flammarion, 1983).

one-piece Norman *bliaut* (fig. 15.7, on right) or Frankish *bliaut gironé* (fig. 15.2; fig. 15.3 on right); and four arrangements of men's garb: courtiers with or without the pallium of office, lay lords (fig. 15.3, two left), chevaliers (fig. 15.4, on right), and the newly-crowned king in the regal dalmatic. Prelates in liturgical vestments (fig. 15.8) stand shoulder-to-shoulder with these personages and with the draped apostolic figures which can be identified through attributes, like Saint Peter's keys.[6]

Devotion to the Virgin Mary expanded during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in part inspired by the writings of theologians such as Saint Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), who identified her as the bride of the *Song of Songs* in the Old Testament.[7] In column-figure sculpture, this devotion took physical form. (fig. 15.9) The memory of the visitor's common humanity with the Virgin and her function in the redemption of humankind is conjured not only by the poignantly physical representations of the Virgin, as in the *Presentation* on the upper lintel at Chartres Cathedral or the *Visitation* at Saint-Loup de Naud, but also by the more ubiquitous belts that embrace the abdomens of column-figure women, emphasizing wombs beneath softly rounded forms, as at Saint-Loup, Chartres, and Saint Ayoul (fig. 15.10). For a believer, such a perceived emphasis on a woman's capacity for child-bearing could conflate the Mother of God, the tabernacle for the Christ Child and the vehicle for salvation, with the building dedicated to Notre-Dame that contains the consecrated body and blood of Christ.

Far from being passive spectators, twelfth-century visitors could be engaged in a physical and imaginative relationship with the monumental sculpture decorating the churches.[8] Bernard's *sermons* emphasize not only the Virgin as the Bride but also consider the feet, the

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[6] The *legem datus est*, for example, might be perceived. That this formula was a familiar one in the twelfth century can be observed not only in antique sarcophagi but also in contemporaneous paintings such as those preserved at Coombes or Hexham in southern England.

[7] Department of Medieval Art and The Cloisters. "The Cult of the Virgin Mary in the Middle Ages". In *Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000–. http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/virg/hd_virg.htm (October 2001) accessed 3 April 2009.

[8] For viewer-response to Romanesque facade sculpture, see Karen Rose Mathews, "Reading Romanesque Sculpture: The Iconography and Reception of the South Portal Sculpture at Santiago de Compostela," *Gesta*, 39/1 (2000), pp. 3–12.

Fig. 15.7 Right jamb, Angers Cathedral. Photo: author.

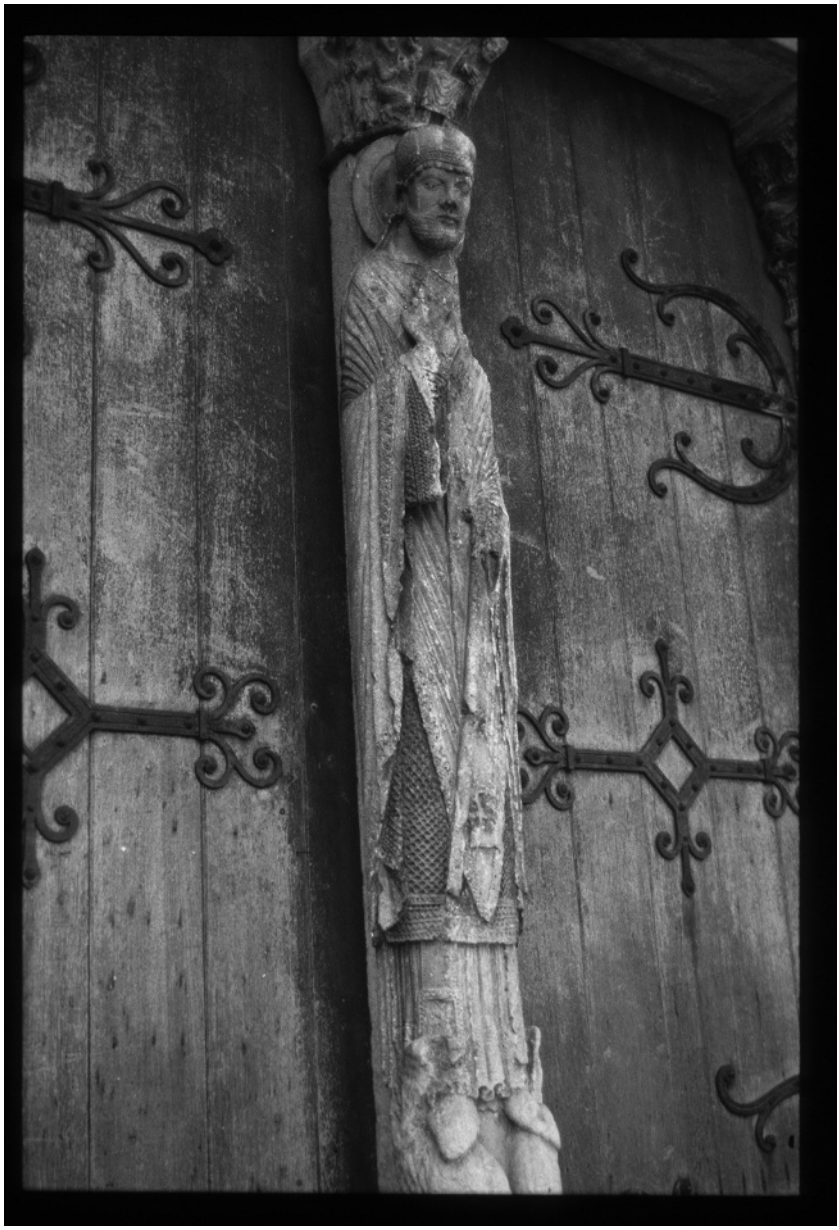

Fig. 15.8 Trumeau figure, Saint-Loup de Naud. Photo: author.

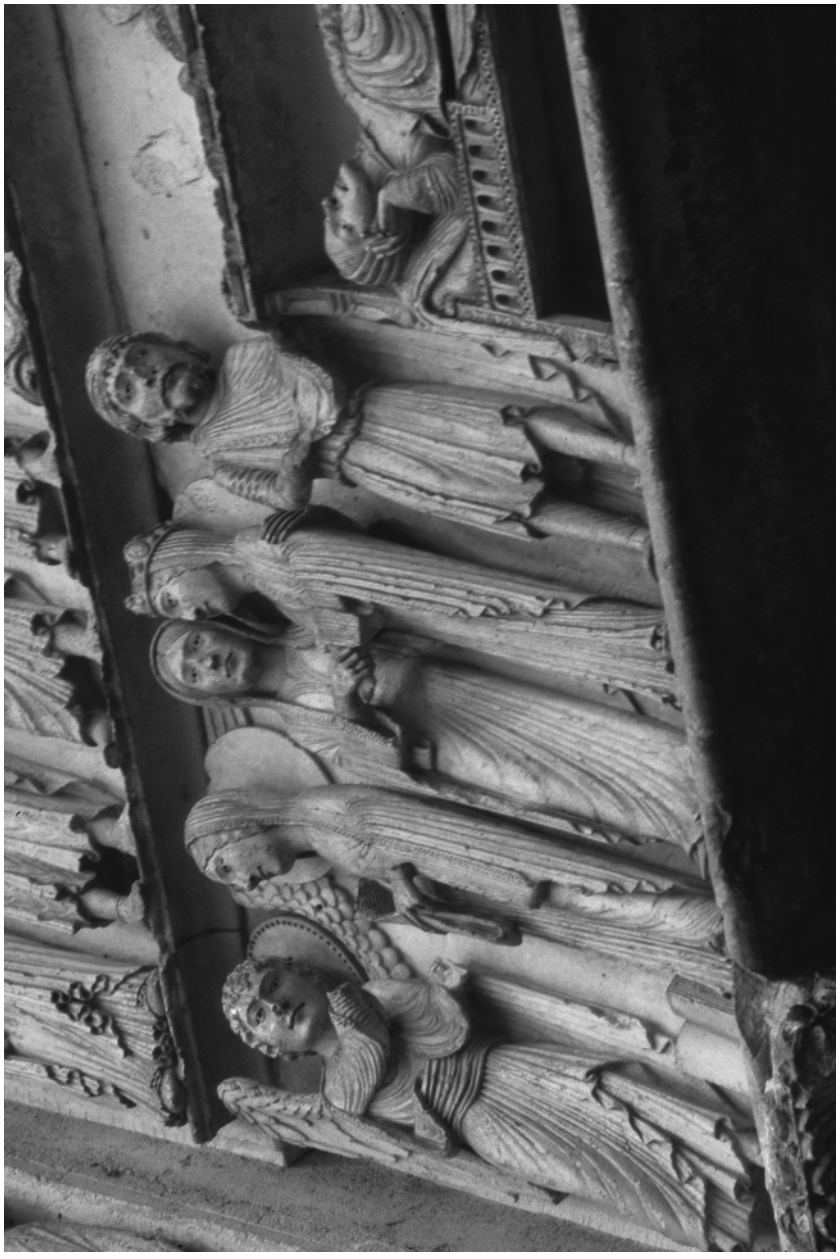

Fig. 15.9 Right portal lower lintel, Chartres Cathedral west façade. Photo: author.

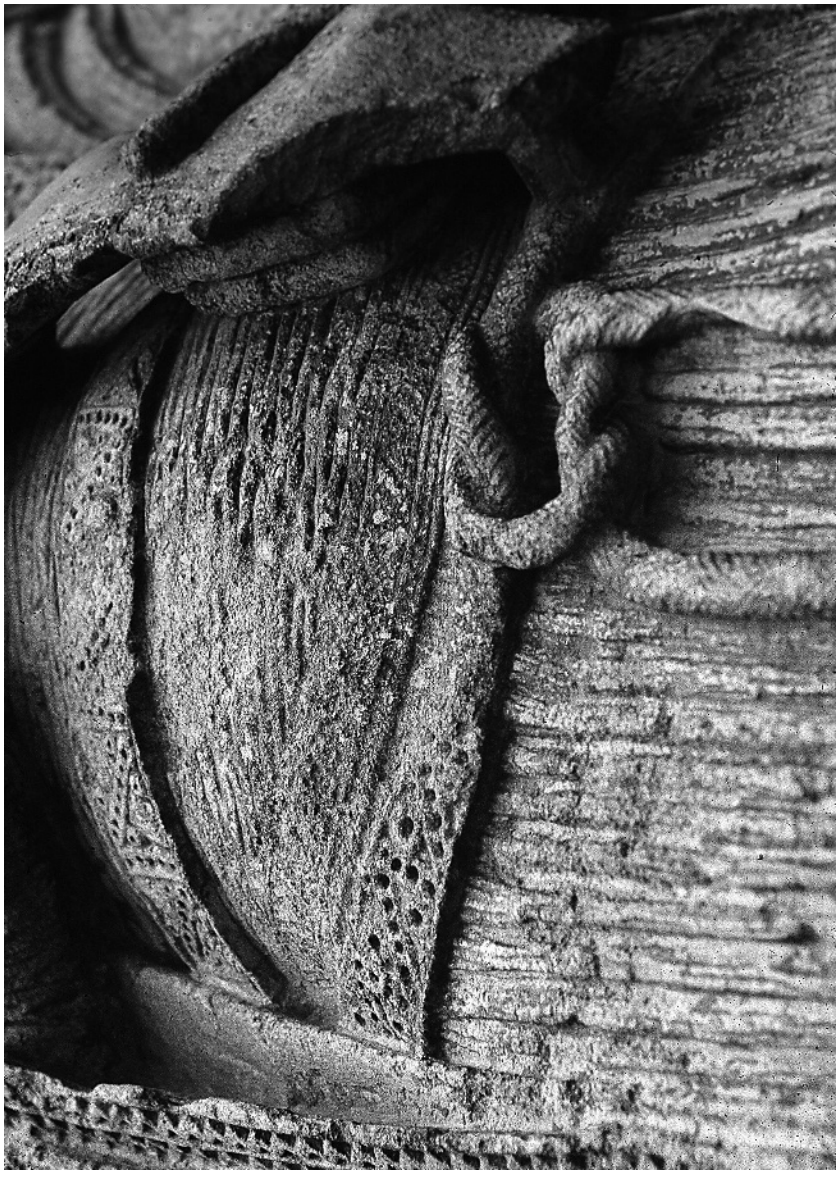

Fig. 15.10 Detail, woman's belt, Chartres Cathedral west façade. Photo: author.

throat, the hands, and the breast named in *the Song of Songs*.[9] The viewer attuned to the Sermons on the *Song of Songs* might remember them in response to the sculpted form of the delicate thorax of the woman at Saint-Loup de Naud. (fig. 15.11) The half-revealed and half-concealed gestures of hands are startling, bringing the delicately sculpted bodies of the column-figures to life. Compelling gestures of hands sculpted nearly in the round appear to move through space, at St-Loup (fig. 15.12), at Chartres, and at Bourges (fig. 15.4), encouraging a suspension of disbelief and an engagement with the mobile personages as one passes between the raked jambs.

The rounded hips of a figure in the Center portal at Chartres Cathedral invest recognition of our common humanity with a kind of intimacy. (fig. 15.13) Exotic textiles clothe the svelte woman on the left jamb of the left portal at Chartres, recalling *Song of Songs* 8:8*:* "…We have a little sister, and she has no breasts…" (fig. 15.14) In other sculptures like the Mother and Child at Vermenton, the form of feminine breasts is more strongly expressed and revealed through the fabrics of a bliaut.[10] (fig. 15.15) A kind of gender-neutrality concerning the humanity made in the image and likeness of God is supported since men's breasts are emphasized in mid-twelfth-century sculpture as well: on the left jamb of the left portal at Saint-Denis, on the left jamb of the Chartres left portal (fig. 15.3), and at Étampes, echoing contemporaneous devotional literature lauding Christ as our nursing mother.[11] The tympanums at Conques and Saint-Denis foregrounded Christ's bare human chest and the wounds of His passion, and emphasized the dual natures of the Messiah. The representation in sculpture of exposed flesh in oval necklines, open mantels, and the bare feet of column-figures can serve as *memoria rerum* for the Incarnation of Christ.[12] Real bodies, textiles, and clothing project meaning and direct attention. The represented clothing in these portals does more than

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[9] Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, *Saint Bernard on the Song of songs; Sermones in Cantica canticorum* (London, 1952). Recent translations are available through http://www.pathsoflove.com/bernard/songofsongs/contents.html.

[10] See figures at Saint-Ayoul, Saint-Denis, Bourges Cathedral North lateral portal, and Chartres Cathedral. *Song of Songs*, 4.5 and 7.4: "Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle, that feed among the lilies…"

[11] Caroline Walker Bynum, "Jesus as Mother and Abbot as Mother: Some Themes in Twelfth-Century Cistercian Writing" *Harvard Theological Review* 70 (June?–Oct. 1977), pp. 257–284.

[12] *Song of Songs*, 4.4: "Your neck is like the tower of David, built for an arsenal…" *Song of Songs*, 7.5: "Your neck is like a tower of ivory…"

Fig. 15.11 Detail, woman's throat and face, left jamb, Saint-Loup de Naud. Photo: author.

Fig. 15.12 Detail, man's hands, left jamb, Saint-Loup de Naud. Photo: author.

Fig. 15.13 Detail, woman's body profile, left jamb, center portal, Chartres Cathedral west façade. Photo: author.

Fig. 15.14 Detail, upper body, left jamb woman, Chartres Cathedral west façade. Photo: author.

Fig. 15.15 Virgin and Child, right jamb column-figure, Vermenton. Photo: author.

conceal the naked body; it binds the humanity of the visitor in an interaction with the Incarnate God through the physical human beings depicted.

The visitor's experience of the architectural sculpture begins with distant comprehension of the building's tremendous magnitude. (fig. 15.16) Shadowed patterns and textures resolve into sculpted surfaces as one approaches. Traversing the parvis before the church, a visitor could scarcely absorb all the intricate details of a sculpture program. (fig. 15.17) The realization at arrival before a portal like Chartres would have been astonishing. The sculpted and painted program would have leapt to life with a shattering specificity both abstract and hyperreal. (fig. 15.2) The arrangement of column-figures along the portal jambs created the impression that the attention of the individual personages was focused upon an entrant rather than upon each other or upon the image in the tympanum, even seeming to turn to accompany the visitor, as the figures do at the Porte des Valois at Saint-Denis. (fig. 15.18) The installation of the column-figures just above the tops of the heads of a crowd provided unrestricted visual access. (fig. 15.6) Raked doorjambs refine and funnel the liminal space between towers or buttresses to the relatively thin-walled doorway for passage from the outside world into the sacred interior. Even if the composition that originally recalled the *adventus* ceremonial welcoming a lord into his dominion, the role of observed and beholder could be reversed through the interaction of sculpture with the ordinary visitor. In the context of the liminal transformation of the believer who enters into an active interaction with painted stone personages, the sculpture has the capacity to serve as witness to the believer's experience. As Victor and Edith Turner have demonstrated, this liminal experience permanently transforms a participant. This sensual active interaction with portal sculpture becomes inseparable from the devotional experience of the church that contained wall paintings, textiles, reliquaries, and painted glass on the other side of the threshold, causing a permanent metamorphosis.

The upper reaches of the towered façade of the church might have been glimpsed fleetingly along the staggered streets of the urban environment. (fig. 15.17) Dany Sandron pointed out the significance of upper façade sculpture as a vehicle to communicate with people in

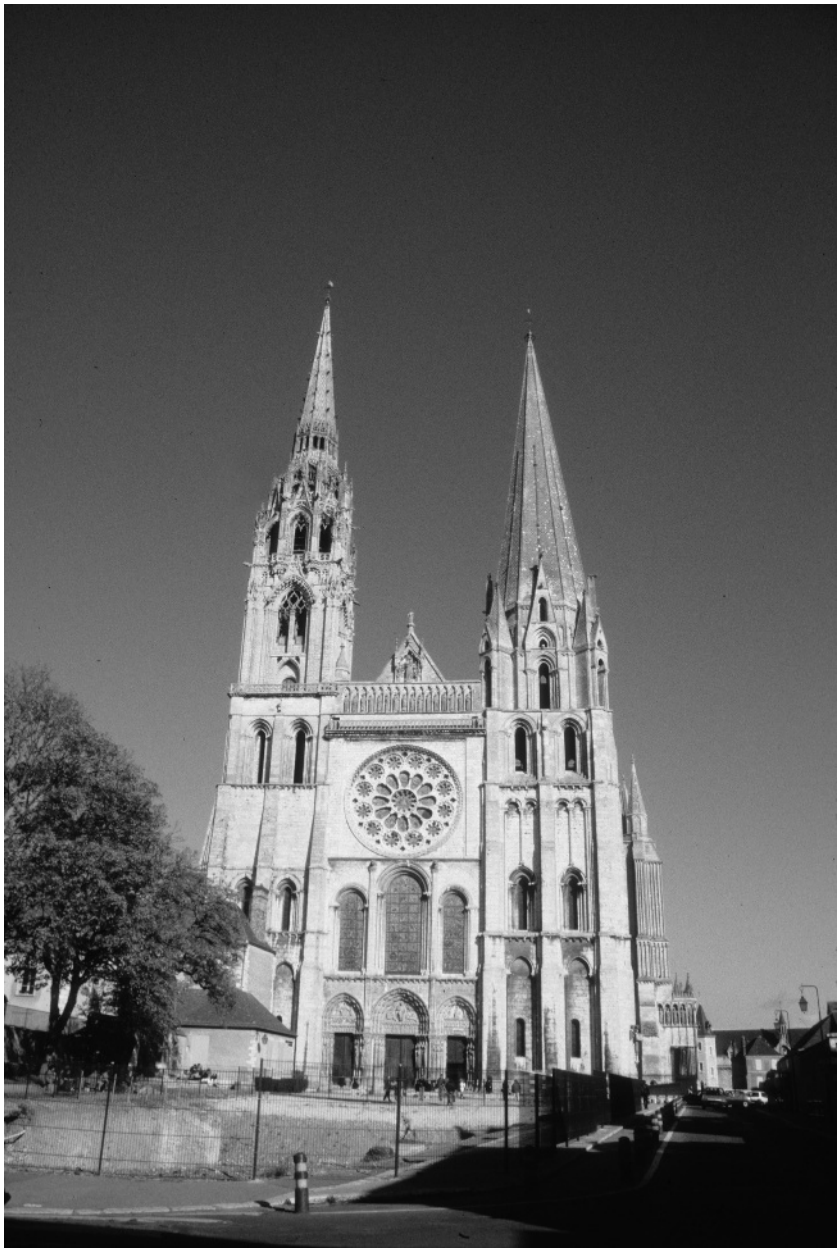

Fig. 15.16 Distant view of Chartres. Photo: author.

Fig. 15.17 Upper façade view of Chartres. Photo: author.

Fig. 15.18 Right jamb, Porte des Valois, north transept, Saint-Denis. Photo: author.

the surrounding countryside.[13] Whether it is the Virgin in the gable of Chartres, St. Firmin on the North Tower at Amiens, or the reliquary shrine on the tower at Auxerre, sculpted elements exalt the relics inside the cathedral. Even when the size of the façade sculpture is colossal, as it is at Reims, fine details could not be discerned from any distance. Nonetheless, once transformed through interaction with sculpted human forms, the initiate could recall and understand the message from experience. Having once passed through the liminal zone of the portal, the transformed believer could interact with distant glimpses of the church to relive remembered sensation.

Passage through the medieval church portal constitutes a transformative liminal experience in the fullest sense.[14] As the participants move from outside to inside, they are briefly suspended in a space which is neither outside nor inside but within the enveloping architecture. (fig. 15.19) The many figurative sculptures swirl around and above the entrant who responds with the action of processing through the doorway. The visitor's proximity to the boldly painted figures sharpens perception and clarifies the images.[15] (fig. 15.12, 15.13, 15.14) The sculpture passes from focal clarity in the center of the field of vision into dissipation at the periphery before the perceived space transforms, closing around the entrant at the threshold. Sculptures alternate between what can and cannot be seen and inanimate figures seem to spring to life on the edges of the visual field: frozen gestures seem to lift and turn in space, exposing bodies that had been obscured. Their contemporary clothing helps to make the human sculptures seem so familiar and recognizable that, immersed through interaction, the participant undergoes transformation.

Nearly a thousand years after the sculpture was installed, the compelling push and pull exerted by the new formula for portal designs is palpable. Space is transformed by recognizable human bodies that

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[13] Dany Sandron discussed the significance of upper façade sculpture as a communication vehicle in "The Cathedral Façade: Monumental Sculpture in Context from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Centuries," *Gothic-Art & Thought in the Middle Ages*, A Conference in Honor of Willibald Sauerländer organized by the Index of Christian Art, Princeton University, 20 March 2009.

[14] Victor Turner and Edith Turner, *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture, Anthropological Perspectives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), p. 2.

[15] Though the original polychromy would have enhanced the perception of sculpted human bodies, even today's visitor can see how the sculpture shifts in and out of focus during a simple passage through the door.

Fig. 15.19 Full immersion view of jambs. Photo: author.

appear to move and rise above the beholder. Drawn in by complex details revealed and concealed, surrounded and compressed by the fragmented figural reliefs of the stone entrance, the visitor can feel propelled through the doorway. At once pulled in and embraced by these extraordinary images of human bodies, engaged viewers respond and push forward into the sacred interior of the church, extending themselves in meditation, devotion, and understanding.

16. MOVEMENT, METAPHOR AND MEMORY: THE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN PILGRIMS AND PORTAL PROGRAMS

Vibeke Olson

On a recent visit to Sainte-Foi at Conques, I took the opportunity to tour the galleries of the church to view the magnificent array of sculpted capitals that decorate this level of the building. Before entering the church, visitors were asked to gather in front of the west portal where a monk began to recount the story of the Last Judgment depicted in the sculptural program in the tympanum above the doorway. (fig. 16.1) While the monk pointed to relevant scenes from his narrative in the image above him, I wondered if my experience in any way mirrored that of a medieval pilgrim, who, after a long journey, was greeted by an intricate display of biblical history carved above the door. Would crowds of pilgrims have been assisted in their attempts to understand the images on these portals by an interlocutor who regaled them with Biblical narrative and cautionary tales all the while pointing to scenes on the tympanum?[1] Might they have attended a Mass in which a sermon was given that made reference to the images they had seen on their way in? Or, were they simply left to decipher the images using whatever textual knowledge they had and their own imaginations? If so, how might they have read them and, beyond that, interacted with them? Surely my 21st century appreciation for the carving above the door cannot have differed so much from that of the countless pilgrims who had preceded me, though their appreciation would certainly have gone beyond the aesthetic.

[1] Interlocutors at pilgrimage centers did indeed exist as confirmed by Desiderius Erasmus who wrote of his experience in front of Becket's shrine at Canterbury in which, "The Prior with a white rod pointed out each jewel, telling its name in French, its value and the name of its donor…" *Pilgrimage to Saint Mary of Walsingham and Saint Thomas of Canterbury*, J.G. Nichols, trans. and ed., (Westminster, 1894), p. 55, cited in Sarah Blick, "Reconstructing the Shrine of Thomas Becket, Canterbury Cathedral," in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, eds. S. Blick and R. Tekippe (Leiden: Brill, 2005), p. 408, n. 9.

Fig. 16.1 Last Judgment (*c.* 1120), Saint-Foi, Conques. Photo: author.

The question of the relationship between image and viewer in the Middle Ages is complex, due mainly to the lack of written evidence. Little survives that tells us how spectators received visual information, how images were used (if at all) in sermons or other exegetic narratives to elucidate the spoken or written word, or even how the faithful may have interacted with the images they saw either physically or mentally. Yet, not knowing how, or the degree to which, images played a role for the laity does not necessarily negate such interaction. Evidence that these portal programs functioned to engage the viewer in some way lies in the sheer number of sculpted programs produced in the 12th and 13th centuries and their placement in a highly visible and public location over the portals of the cathedrals and churches along the pilgrimage roads through France and Spain.[2] Add to this the consistent and repetitive nature of the imagery displayed in the portals—scenes of Christ's incarnation, ascension, and return—and its didactic potential becomes implicitly clear. But were these portals simply intended to be 'Bibles in stone,' to be pondered from a distance or might the viewer have been invited to mentally and physically engage with them? A pilgrim, presented with consistent and repetitive sculpted portal images at each point in their journey, must have interacted on some level with what they saw so prominently displayed on the front of the church above the doorway. In his study on the function and interpretation of carved images, Roland Recht noted that viewers might have required help in order to understand the images they saw but that this help needed only to be "enough to introduce the illiterate to the degree of meaning that was accessible to them."[3] As I will explore in this essay,

[2] Many studies have addressed the reading of portal sculpture in the context of a specific building or site. Among these are included: Margot Fassler, "Liturgy and Sacred History in the Twelfth Century Tympana at Chartres," *Art Bulletin* 73/5 (1993), pp. 499–520; Peter Low, "'You Who Were Once Far Off': Enlivening Scripture in the Main Portal at Vézelay," *Art Bulletin*, 85/3 (2003), pp. 469–489; and Cecilia M. Gaposchkin, "Portals, Processions, Pilgrimage, and Piety: Saints Firmin and Honoré at Amiens," in Blick and Tekippe, *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage*, pp. 217–242. The present essay has no intention of negating the findings of these and other important papers; rather, it is written with the intention of understanding portal programs on a wider geographical scale—one that addresses repetitive conventions found across a wide spatial spectrum. It is my conviction that just as there are diverse audiences, there are many ways of interpreting portal programs.

[3] Roland Recht, *Believing and Seeing: The Art of Gothic Cathedrals*, tr. Mary Whittall (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 239. Recht's comment touches on two hotly contested topics, literacy in the Middle Ages and the use of art as "books" for the illiterate. On the former, see Michael T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written*

in order for medieval pilgrims to have read a portal program with any degree of comprehension, they would have required at the very least a basic knowledge of salvific principles.[4] Because pilgrimage was the means by which many sought salvation, one must assume some rudimentary familiarity with sacred history and eschatological concepts on the part of the pilgrims; a basic understanding that salvation could be attained through belief in Christ's incarnation, sacrifice, resurrection, and return, and, following this, that salvation could be granted at the end of time. In order to understand the relationship between viewer and image, it is essential to consider the salvific message of the physical structure of the portal itself, its visual program and the role of the spectators' movements in triggering meaning. It is within this framework that I will consider the role of the portal program as a bearer of meaning that reinforces the act of seeking salvation through pilgrimage in its consistent reference to sacred history and eschatology, its commanding and symbolic presence directly above the door, through the dynamic interaction of image, text and movement,[5] and through the power of the image to act as an aid to memory by reinforcing that which is heard or read by way of sight.

Record in England, 1066–1307 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), esp. pp. 183–188, and on the latter, see Lawrence Duggan, "Was Art Really the 'Book of the Illiterate'?" *Word and Image* 5/3 (1989), pp. 227–251; and further, L. Duggan, "Reflections on 'Was Art Really the 'Book of the Illiterate'?'" in *Reading Images and Texts: Medieval Images and Texts as Forms of Communication: Papers from the Third Utrecht Symposium on Medieval Literacy, Utrecht, 7–9 December 2000*, eds. M. Hageman and M. Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), pp. 109–120.

[4] See in particular Avril Henry, *Biblia Pauperum: A Facsimile and Edition* (Cornell University Press: Ithica, NY, 1987), p. 17, in which she correctly states, "The surprisingly persistent notion that the medieval visual arts were designed to instruct the unlettered is based on a misconception.... pictures in this mode only instruct if you already know what they mean, Then they act as reminders of the known truth."

[5] I should note here that reading itself in the Middle Ages could be a highly performative endeavor. As Michael Camille wrote, "Reading, far more that being a simple, linear flow of information as we think of it today, implicated the whole body and mind in a process of active participation..." M. Camille, "'Seeing and Lecturing': Disputation in a Twelfth-Century Tympanum from Reims" in *Reading Medieval Images: The Art Historian and the Object*, eds. E. Sears and T.K. Thomas (University of Michigan Press: Ann Arbor, 2002), pp. 77–78. It seems a small leap to apply this concept to the reading of images, thus reinforcing the idea that a viewer would be predisposed to interacting with images.

Picturing Memories: Ways of Seeing

Although pilgrims rarely, if ever, made reference in their writings to the images they saw,[6] a plethora of literature exists on the function of images in the form of justification for their use within the church. These writings loosely fall into two categories—the justification of images as didactic tools and the justification of images as aids to memory. Foremost among the writings cited in any discussion of the function or reception of medieval images is the epistle of Pope Gregory (540–604) in which he refers to holy images as the books for the illiterate.[7] This indicates that images could be read, much like the words in a text, though to what degree is still a matter of debate among scholars.[8] Instructing the visitor to Nola in how to look at the wall paintings there, Paulinus of Nola (*c.* 354–431) highlights the importance of images to a believer by telling his viewer to "crane your neck a little till you take in everything with your face tilted back. The man who looks at these [paintings] and acknowledges the truth within these empty figures nurtures his believing mind with representations by no means empty."[9] Even Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153), the iconoclastic Cistercian, in his *Apologia* of 1125 understood the function of images for the laity stating, "We know that the bishops…use material beauty to arouse the devotion of a carnal people because they cannot do so by spiritual means."[10] It was the images in monastic surroundings that he was primarily concerned with. He saw them as a distraction to the monks, who found it, "…more pleasant to read the

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[6] This phenomenon has also been noted by Georgia Frank, *The Memory of the Eyes: Pilgrims to Living Saints in Christian late Antiquity* (University of California Press: Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2000), esp. p. 105: "With such an emphasis on seeing, it is puzzling that these pilgrims tell us little about what they actually saw."

[7] "Ymagines et picturae sanctorum, et precipue crucis Christi, sunt libri laicorum" quoted in Susan K. Hagen, *Allegorical Remembrance: A Study of "The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man" as a Medieval Treatise on Seeing and Remembering* (Athens. GA: University of Georgia Press, 1990), p. 102.

[8] See for example Duggan, "Book of the Illiterate," pp. 227–251.

[9] *Poems of Paulinus of Nola*, p. 289, poem 27, lines 511ff, cited in Cynthia Hahn, "Seeing and Believing: The Construction of Sanctity in Early Medieval Saints' Shrines," *Speculum* 72/4 (1997), p. 1097, n. 133. For further reading on Paulinus of Nola and his attitude toward images, see Giselle de Nie, "Paulinus of Nola and the Image within the Image," in *Reading Images and Texts*, eds. Hageman and Mostert, pp. 262–289.

[10] Conrad Rudolph, *Things of Greater Importance: Bernard of Clairvaux's Apologia and the Medieval Attitude Toward Art* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), pp. 318–319.

marble than the books…"[11] Thomas Aquinas (*c.* 1225–1274) reiterates and expands upon Bernard's position in his commentary on Peter Lombard's *Sentences*: "There was a threefold reason for the institution of images in the church. Firstly, for the instruction of the simple who are taught by them as though by books; secondly, in order that the mystery of the incarnation and the examples of the saints may be more firmly in our memory when they are daily present to the sight; thirdly to excite the feeling of devotion, which is more effectively excited by what it sees than by what is heard."[12] Aquinas makes two important points in this passage, images can be didactic and images can be used as aids to memory. In referring to images as memory aids, Aquinas is following a long-standing tradition that has its roots in classical antiquity. Cicero (106–43 BC) for example, in *De Oratore*, discusses the importance of sight to memory: "The most complete pictures are formed in our minds of the things that have been conveyed to them and imprinted on them by the senses, but the keenest of all our senses is the sense of sight, and that consequently perceptions received by the ears…can be most easily retained in the mind if they are also conveyed to our minds by the mediation of the eyes."[13] The 5th century author Martianus Capella also reflected on the connection between sight and memory in a reference to the memory treatise of Simonides, in which he noted, "He learned…that it is order which sustains the precepts of memory. *These are to be pondered upon in well lighted places in which the images of things are to be placed*…what is consigned to memory is impressed on the places, as on wax or on a page; and the remembrance of things is held by the images, as though they were letters."[14] Sculpted portal programs referencing Biblical history, eschatology and the salvific power of the doorway, and placed as they were on the "well-lit" exterior of the building directly above the doors, would certainly have invited "pondering" on the part of the spectator.

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[11] Rudolph, *Things of Greater Importance*, pp. 318–319.

[12] Thonmas Aquinas, *Scriptum super libros sententiarium*, part 3, question ix, solution 2, translated in Susan K. Hagen, *Allegorical Remembrance: A Study of "The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man" as a Medieval Treatise on Seeing and Remembering* (Athens. GA: University of Georgia Press, 1990), p. 103.

[13] Cicero, De Oratore, 2.87.357 (LCL 1:469) quoted in Frank, *The Memory of the Eyes*, p. 117.

[14] Italics mine for emphasis. Martianus Capella, *De nuptiis Piliologiae et Mercurii*, transl. in Frances Yates, *The Art of Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 51.

To the medieval mind, then, portal programs could serve as texts for the illiterate, arouse lay devotion and assist with memory; in essence they were seen as a didactic tool, a pictorial sign system used to inspire memories and to teach.

Writing on signs, Augustine (354–430) stated a sign is "a thing which causes us to think of something beyond the impression the thing itself makes upon the senses."[15] This semiotic thought process is evident in writings of the later middle ages, as for example in the 14th century Guillaume de Deguileville's, *Pélerinage de la vie humaine*, an allegorical poem about the pilgrimage of life presented as a journey to Jerusalem by a nameless pilgrim and his companion Grace Dieu. In this poem, the character Grace Dieu, like Augustine, teaches the Pilgrim that things may serve as signs of abstract concepts; that difficult ideas may be easier to comprehend if they are translated into appropriate visual analogies.[16] Thus, one of the roles Grace Dieu plays in the poem is to act as the Pilgrim's memory, in this way, she can keep track of all that the Pilgrim knows and that which he has seen and experienced; she becomes the physical embodiment of his abstract memory. Moreover, the Pilgrim himself also explains to the reader that one of the ways he finds images to be useful is to awaken memories, in this case, of the miracles of the saints and the Passion of Christ.[17] Perhaps it is along these lines, then, that we can further understand the role of the portal programs within the context of pilgrimage experience.

Portal programs, specifically those referencing the apocalypse, (figs. 16.1, 16.2) scenes of Christ's ascension, (fig. 16.3) and the coronation of the Virgin. (fig. 16.4) remind the pilgrim of the ultimate pilgrimage destination—the Heavenly Jerusalem. In interpreting these portal programs and their relationship to pilgrims and pilgrimage, I follow the twelfth-century scholar of rhetoric, Boncompagno da Signa and his discussion on the memory of heaven: "I leave this material of remembering to the Apocalypse and to the testimonies of the holy fathers."[18] Although he eschews artificial assistance in creating memories of heaven, he points specifically to the Apocalypse, described in the Book

[15] Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* 2.1 in Hagen, *Allegorical Remembrance*, p. 101.
[16] Hagen, *Allegorical Remembrance*, p. 4.
[17] Hagen, *Allegorical Remembrance*, p. 102.
[18] Boncampagno da Signa, *On Memory*, trans. Sean Gallagher in *The Medieval Craft of Memory: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, eds. M. Carruthers and J.M. Ziolkowski (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), p. 112.

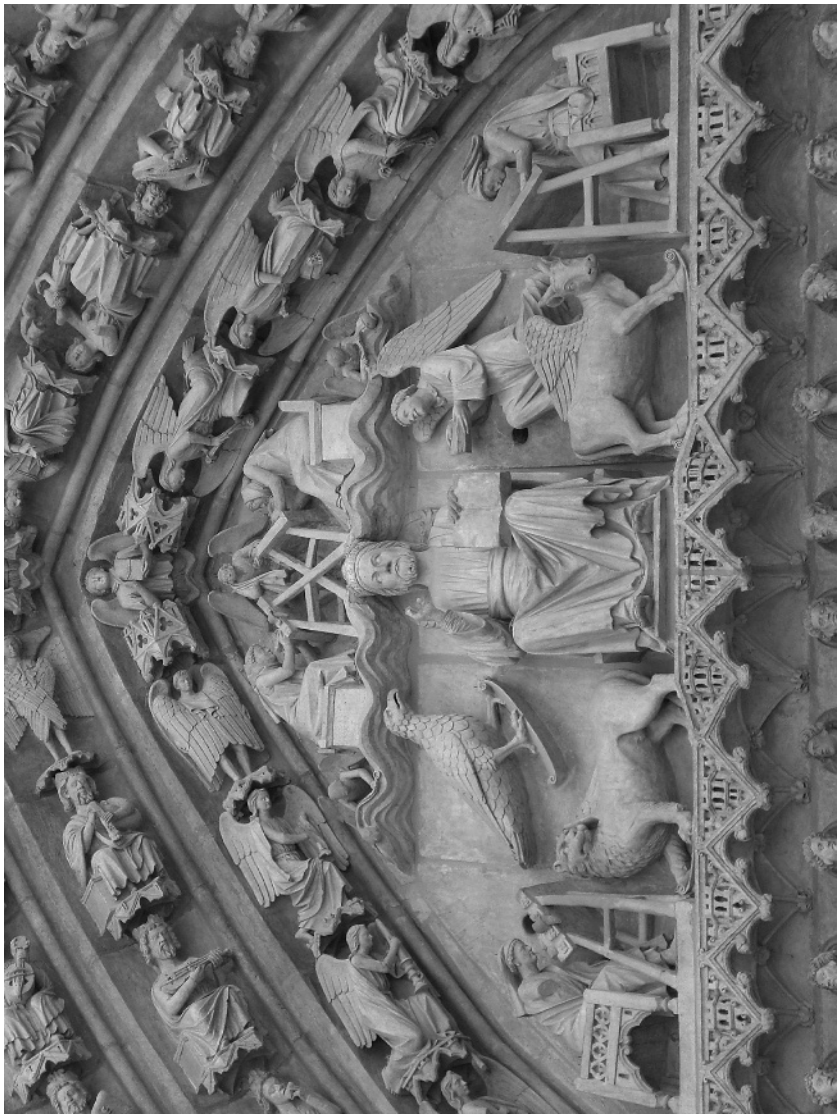

Fig. 16.2 Christ in Majesty (*c.* 1235–40), Puerta le la Sarmental, Santa María, Burgos. Photo: author.

Fig. 16.3 Ascension of Christ (*c.* 1120), Priory of Perrecy-les-Forges. Photo: author.

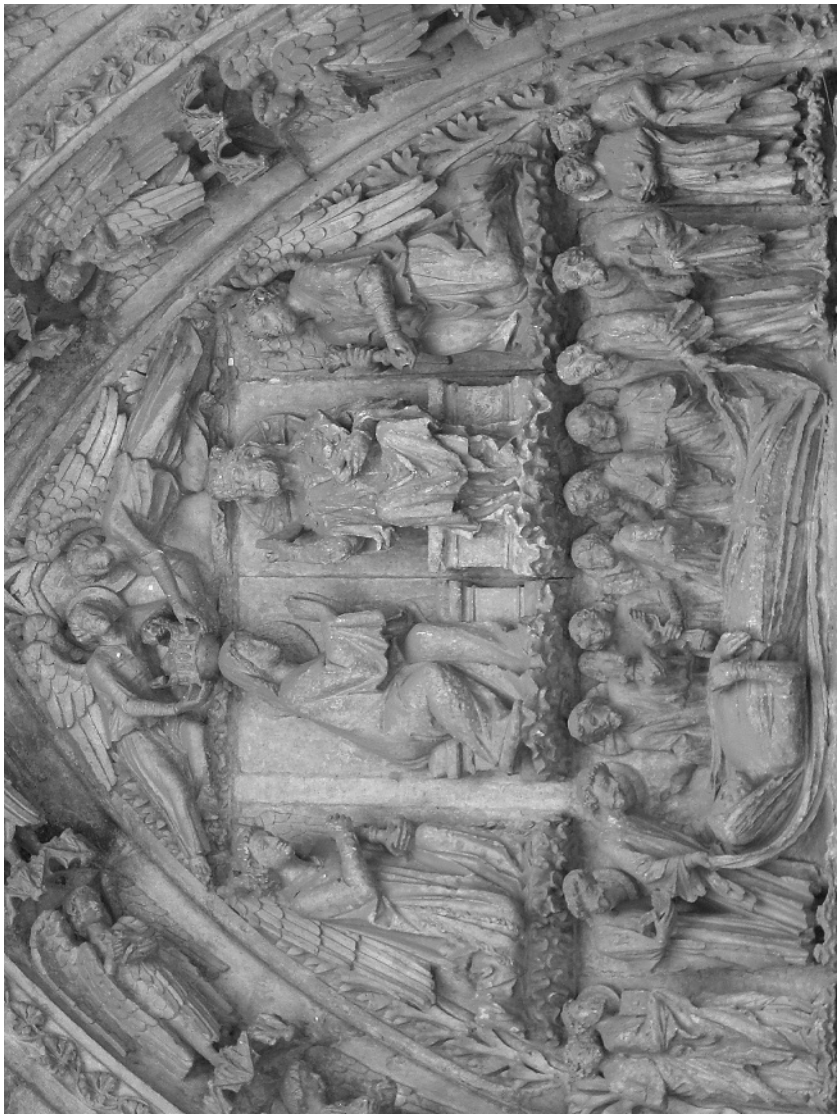

Fig. 16.4 Coronation of the Virgin (*c.* 1250–1300), right portal of the west façade of Santa María de León. Photo: author.

of Revelation and depicted on a significant number of portal programs in the Middle Ages. The connection between images of salvation and the Heavenly Jerusalem was also noted by Allan Doig in reference to the depiction of the Last Judgment over the door at Conques: "The message [of the portal] is abundantly clear, and fixes the path, and the hope of the approaching pilgrim—make your prayers to the saint for her intercession to release you from the chains of your sins, make your personal offering for the salvation of your soul, and continue on your pilgrimage in the hope that you will ultimately arrive in the Heavenly Jerusalem which lies open to you beyond these doors."[19] The correlation is tacit; the images would have elicited an active response in the pilgrim who upon reading them would envision memories of the apocalypse and the heavenly city, and further, imagine the promise of their own salvation at the end of time.

Eschatology in the Age of Cathedrals

Despite the millennium having come and gone without incident, a concern with living in the last age still dominated medieval thinking. The penchant for apocalyptic thinking and eschatological concerns are evidenced not only in the images signifying scriptural history, the revelation of future events, and the proceedings of the end of days presented in the portals, but also in the writings of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. To understand the framework for the imagery in the portals, one must first look back to the writings of Augustine on the subject. In the *City of God*, Augustine wrote that "the whole period embraced by the Apocalypse" spans events "from the first coming of Christ to the end of the world, which will be Christ's second coming."[20] To be sure, when considering the imagery presented in the portals of the cathedrals and pilgrimage churches, there is a clear tendency to reflect Augustine's apocalyptic history from the incarnation through the second coming. Although referenced to some degree in most portal

[19] Allan Doig, *Liturgy and Architecture from the Early Church to the Middle Ages* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2008, rpt. 2009), p. 163.

[20] Augustine, *De civitate Dei*, 20.8, transl. Henry Bettson and ed. David Knowles, *The City of God* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1972), p. 119, cited in Richard K. Emmerson and Ronald B. Herzman, *The Apocalyptic Imagination in Medieval Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992), p. 2.

programs,[21] the entire series of events is perhaps best illustrated on the *c.* 1145 west façade of Chartres.[22] Over the south portal is a depiction of the incarnation. (fig. 16.5) In the tympanum, the Christ child is presented in the Virgin's lap, and in the lintels below are scenes of the annunciation, visitation and adoration of the shepherds, along with the presentation of Christ in the temple. (fig. 16.6) Over the north portal is what appears to be a depiction of the Christ's ascension;[23] and in the central portal (fig. 16.7) is a reference to Christ's return at the end of time as described in Revelation (4:2–7).

In the texts of the period we continue to find a tendency toward apocalyptic eschatology, as exemplified not only by such works as Beatus of Liébana's 8th century *Commentary on the Apocalypse*, numerous copies of which continued to be produced between the 10th and 15th centuries, but also in the new texts of the 11th through 13th centuries. Although, as noted by Bernard McGinn: "Not all authors who indulge in such speculation [namely concern with the division of ages] are overtly apocalyptic. Nevertheless, the concern with the determination of the stages of history is always a near neighbor to the expectations of the End—the desire to locate one's own time in the grand scheme of history frequently serves to show its proximity to the final events."[24]

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[21] The list of portal programs reflecting apocalyptic history is extensive and includes, among others: the west façade of Notre-Dame in Paris (Coronation of the Virgin, Last Judgment, Incarnation); the west façade of Reims (the Crucifixion, Coronation of the Virgin, and Christ in Majesty); the west portal of Saint-Lazare in Autun (Last Judgment); the west portal of Sainte-Foi in Conques (Last Judgment); the Porte Miégeville at Saint-Sernin Toulouse (Ascension of Christ); the south portal of Saint-Pierre in Moissac (Christ in Majesty); the Puertas de la Sarmental and la Pellejería at Santa María de Burgos (Christ in Majesty and the Last Judgment); the west façade of Santa María de León (the Incarnation, Last Judgment, and Coronation of the Virgin); the portal of the church of Santiago at Carrión de los Condes (Christ in Majesty); and the Pórtico de la Gloria at Santiago de Compostela (Christ in Majesty).

[22] Among the scholarship on the iconography of the tympana of the royal portal of Chartres are included: Fassler, "Liturgy and Sacred History"; Anne Prache, *Chartres Cathedral: Image of the Heavenly Jerusalem* (Paris, CNRS Editions, 1983); Peter Kidson, *Sculpture at Chartres* (New York: St. Martins Press, 1975); Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral: Christ, Mary, Ecclesia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1959).

[23] Fassler, "Liturgy and Sacred History" interpreted this image as that of Christ before time and although this is a valid conclusion in the context of her argument, it is just as plausible that to a lay audience this image would reflect the ascension of Christ.

[24] Bernard McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Traditions in the Middle Ages* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979), p. 109.

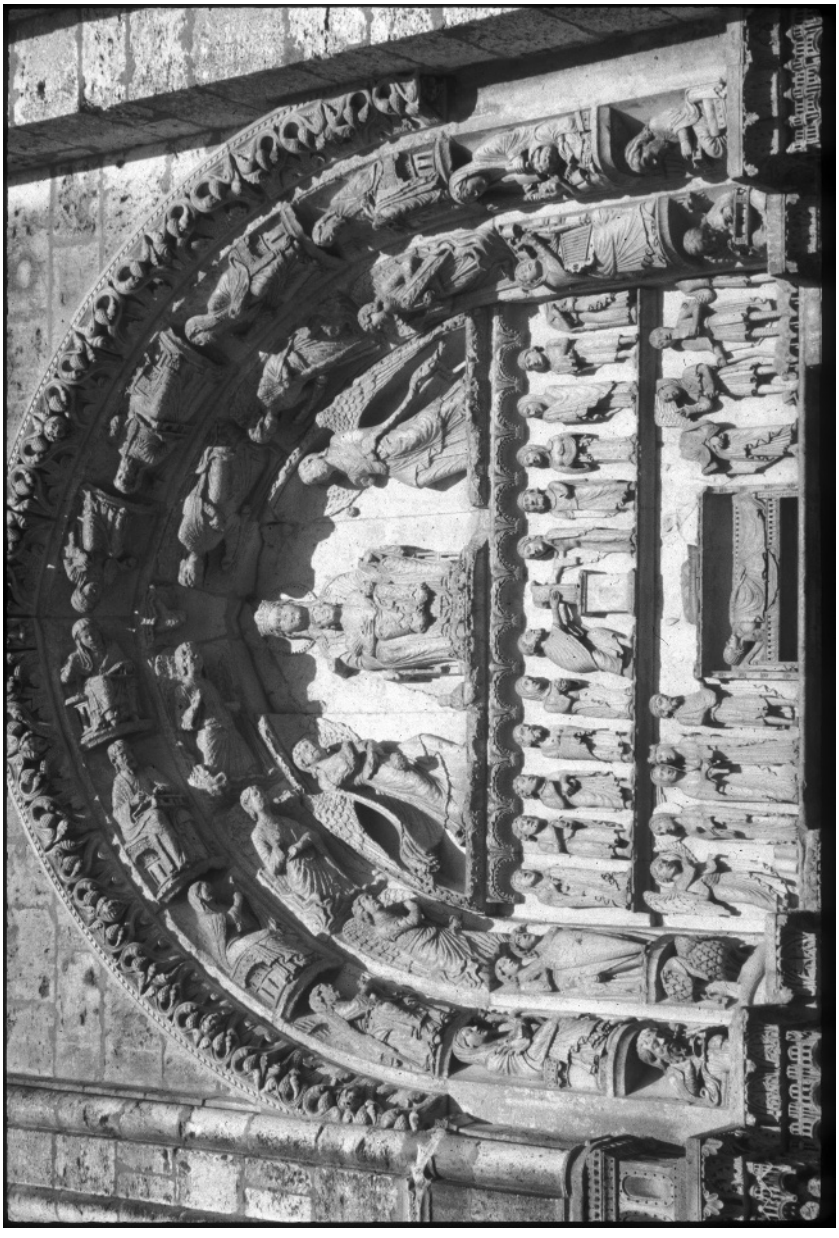

Fig. 16.5 Virgin and Child Enthroned (the Incarnation of Christ) (*c.* 1145), right portal of the west façade of Chartres Cathedral. Photo: author.

Fig. 16.6 The Ascension of Christ (*c.* 1145), left portal of the west façade of Chartres Cathedral. Photo: author.

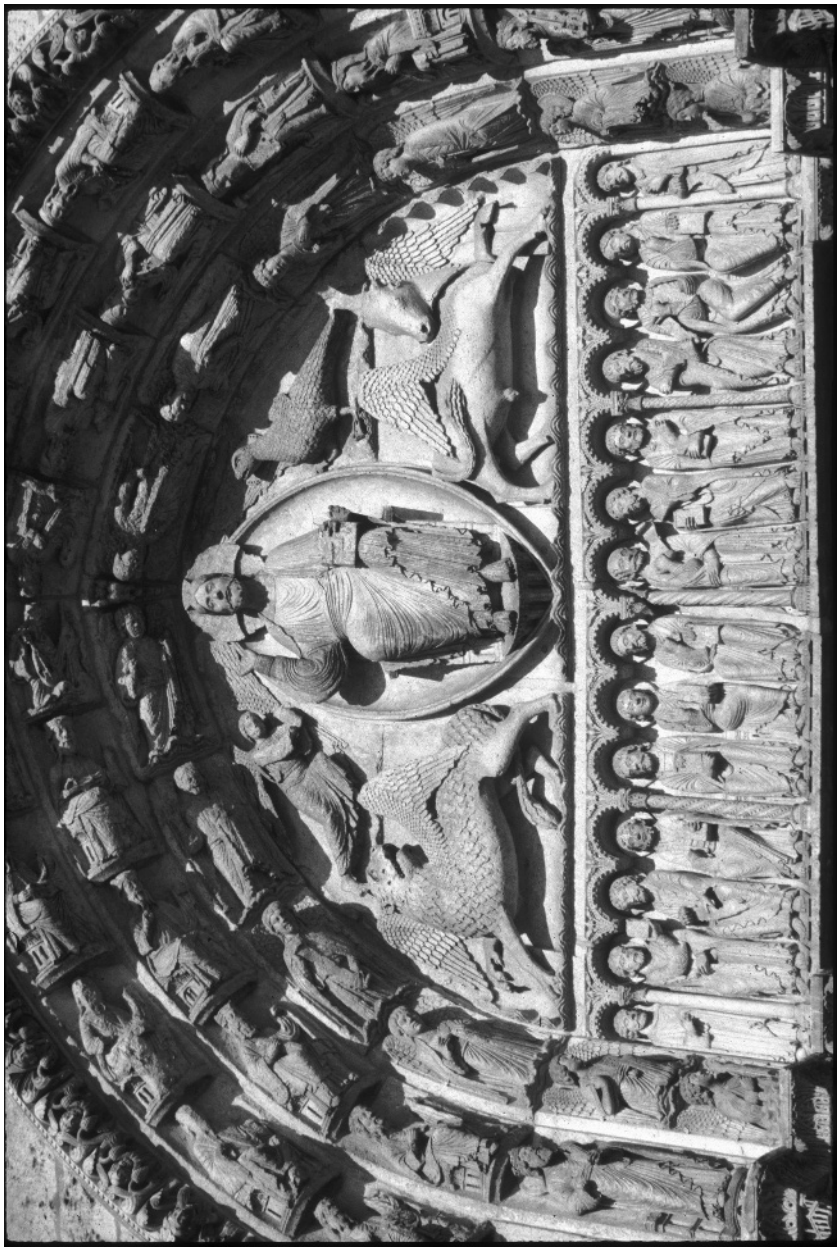

Fig. 16.7 Christ in Majesty (*c.* 1145), central portal of the west façade of Chartres Cathedral. Photo: author.

Rupert of Deutz (1075–1129), for instance, in the prologue to *The Holy Trinity and Its Works* (*c.* 1117) wrote, "The work of the Trinity has three parts from the founding of the world to its End. The first is from the rise of the first light to the fall of the first man. The second is from the fall of that same first man to the Passion of the second man, Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The third from his Resurrection to the End of the world, that is, to the general resurrection of the dead."[25] Thus, according to Rupert, he was living in the third age, awaiting the end of days. Similarly, Joachim of Fiore (*c.* 1135–1202) made Trinitarian analogies in his *Exposition of the Book of Revelation,* and placed himself in the third age.[26] Hugh of St. Victor (*c.* 1090–1141) in *The Mystical Ark of Noah* (4:9), also noted the approach of the End: "Thus it appears to be established by divine providence that what was done at the beginning of the ages, at the outset of the world, took place in the East, and finally, as time runs along to its End, the completion of events should penetrate even as far as the West. Hence we may acknowledge that the End of the world approaches because the sequence of events has reached the geographical end of the world."[27] Anselm of Havelberg (*c.* 1100–1158) in Book 1 of his *Dialogues* (1149) saw an apocalyptic pattern in the division of the life of the church as symbolized by the seven seals of the Book of Revelation,[28] and Richard of St. Victor (d. 1173) followed suit in his *In Apocalypsim Ioannis* and illustrated eschatological concerns in his Commentary on Ezekiel.[29] Authors such as Bonaventure (1221–1274), who in his *Legenda maior* (*c.* 1261) identified St. Francis in apocalyptic terms, characterize apocalyptic eschatology in the thirteenth century.[30]

Why the concern with the End? Beyond a simple curiosity about the future and desire for Christ's return, one must also consider the role of the Crusades in the centrality of apocalyptic eschatology during this period, particularly in the late 12th and early 13th century. The

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[25] Translation in McGinn, *Visions of the End*, p. 110.

[26] For an analysis and discussion of Joachim's text, see Emmerson and Herzman, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, pp. 1–35, and McGinn, *Visions of the End*, pp. 126–141.

[27] Translation in McGinn, *Visions of the End*, p. 111.

[28] McGinn, *Visions of the End*, pp. 109–110.

[29] *Apocalypsim in Ioannis*, 2.3–10, PL 196:754–756; *Commentary on Ezekiel*, PL 196:527–600.

[30] For discussion of Bonaventure's characterization of St. Francis in apocalyptic terms see, Emmerson and Herzman, *Apocalyptic Imagination*, pp. 36–75, and McGinn Visions of the End, pp. 196–202.

capture of Jerusalem as a result of the First Crusade and the establishment of a Christian Kingdom there in 1099 served to refocus attention on the Holy Land, causing resurgence in pilgrimage to the land of Christ's incarnation, passion, and resurrection. The loss of Edessa in 1144 and the failure of the Second Crusade in 1149, compounded with the loss of Jerusalem in 1187 and the failure of the Third Crusade to regain control of the Holy Land from Saladin in 1192 undoubtedly led to a prevailing sense of pessimism which may have been countered by renewed hope in the nearness of Christ's return. Moreover, the dangers inherent in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land during this period of political turmoil and instability resulted in increased local, national, and regional pilgrimages,[31] such as the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela where, fittingly, we find a preponderance of portal programs dealing with eschatological history.[32] These portal programs, placed as they were on the exterior of the building, could be seen and, more importantly, interacted with, simply by walking through the doorway.[33]

Doorways as Mechanisms for Salvation

The Bible has many references to entering, exiting and doorways. For instance, "Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out" (Deut 28:6); "Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord: This gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter" (Ps 118:19–20); "May the Lord watch over your comings in and goings out" (Ps 121:8); and,

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[31] According to Simon Coleman and John Elsner, *Pilgrimage Past and Present in the World Religions* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 93, by the high Middle Ages, most pilgrimage was performed on the local or national level, and the importance of Jerusalem became that of a model.

[32] See also Daniel Connolly's discussion of the effect of the loss of Jerusalem on the production of labyrinth pavements that he posits were created as simulacra for the Jerusalem pilgrimage, "At the Center of the World: The Labyrinth Pavement of Chartres Cathedral," in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage in Northern Europe and the British Isles*, eds. S. Blick and R. Tekippe (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 285–314, esp. pp. 308–313. He also notes that this type of labyrinth, "…triggered associations with the city [of Jerusalem], both in its earthly and historic instance and with its future, heavenly instantiation…" p. 287.

[33] For consideration of the public nature of medieval portal sculpture see, Charles F. Altman, "The Medieval Marquee: Church Portal Sculpture as Publicity," *Journal of Popular Culture* 14/1 (1980), pp. 37–46.

"I am the door, by me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (John 10:9). The doorway also represents the entrance to heaven, as specified in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins who arrive to find the doorway either open or shut thereby enabling or disabling their entrance into the heavenly realm: "And while they [the foolish virgins] went to buy [oil for their lamps], the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut" (Matt 25:10). Reference to a doorway as an entry to heaven is again repeated in Revelation: "After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter" (Rev 4:1).

In these texts, the door is presented as a metaphor and as a mechanism through which salvation is attained. However, salvation is only attainable through direct physical interaction with the doorway itself—movement on the part of the pilgrim entering and/or exiting across the liminal threshold provided by the structure of the portal. The doorway is thus a catalyst and a referent; it is a means to salvation and a signifier of the boundary that defines this state. Those who cross over the boundary by way of entering the door are rewarded for their act with Christ's blessing. By entering through the open doorway of the church, the pilgrim's movement becomes synonymous with acceptance into the heavenly realm.[34]

Interacting with Images

In the Middle Ages it was not unusual to find a direct correlation between Biblical texts referencing doorways and salvation and the physical structure of the doorway itself. One early example of this can be seen in the sixth century monastery at Sinai where the text of Psalm 118:20 (quoted above) was carved over the entrance gate to the monastery and again into the wooden lintel over the main entrance lead-

[34] This idea was made concrete in Italy in the late 11th and early 12th centuries on eight Byzantine bronze church doors on which dedicatory inscriptions and/or pictorial programs acted to make the doors "surrogates for the gates of Paradise." See Margaret English Frazer, "Church Doors as the Gates of Paradise: Byzantine Bronze Doors in Italy," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 27 (1973), pp. 145–162, esp. p. 147.

ing into the nave of the church.[35] The example of Sinai, however, is unusual in that it favors text rather than image to make its point. More commonly we find images used to illuminate the interface between text and doorway. Carved directly into the tympana over the doorways leading into a church, these images relate not only to sacred history and the revelation of future events, specifically those expected at the end of time, but also to those texts discussed above that emphasize the notion of entering and of heaven. By highlighting these textual references in the form of an image above an entryway, a triangulation occurs between image, text and action, whereby the individual parts, the image, text, and the action, reinforce the whole, the suggestion of salvation through Christ's blessings and heaven.[36] It is the pairing of image with text considered in conjunction with physical movement that makes such a reading possible.[37]

The sculptural programs depicted on portals beginning in the mid-11th century and culminating in the complex programs of the Gothic cathedrals, reinforce the salvific properties of the doorway generated by the faithful via the action of moving through it. For instance, in a reference to Revelation 4:1, (Then in my vision I saw a door open), Margot Fassler demonstrated that this text became an important source for portal sculpture because of its emphasis on doors and the act of walking through them.[38] Peter Low, in his discussion of the portal program at Vézelay, also cited the salvific power of the portal and the act of entering it as its triggering mechanism.[39] Reinforcing the portal's function as a mechanism for salvation is the apocalyptic/eschatological timeline presented in the imagery itself. In the imagery of the portals, the spectator is presented with a visual map of apocalyptic

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[35] Simon Coleman and John Elsner, "The Pilgrim's Progress: Art, Architecture and Ritual Movement at Sinai," *World Archaeology* 26/1 Archaeology of Pilgrimage (1994), pp. 78–79.

[36] My use of the term triangulation is inspired by Madeleine Caviness' theory of triangulation in viewing and understanding medieval art. See Madeleine H. Caviness, *Reforming Medieval Art Differences, Margins, Boundaries* (Tufts University electronic Book: 2001) http://nils.lib.tufts.edu/Caviness

[37] Margot Fassler is an example of one scholar who has taken this approach in her interpretation of the twelfth century tympana at Chartres in relation to the liturgical ceremony of the entrance of the Bishop into his church—the introit. See Fassler, "Liturgy and Sacred History."

[38] Fassler, "Liturgy and Sacred History," p. 514.

[39] Low, "You Who Were Once Far Off," esp. p. 481, "…the possibility of salvation can only begin at the moment the visitor enters the basilica through the doorway below."

time as proposed by Augustine, beginning with Christ's incarnation as illustrated on the west façades of Chartres and Notre-Dame in Paris, among others. Many of these programs also function on an eschatological level, alluding to the ultimate destiny of humanity vis-à-vis references to the end of time, judgment and the establishment of a kingdom in heaven. Images of Christ's ascension into heaven make reference to Biblical history as well as placing the viewer firmly in the last age, the period preceding the second coming. Last Judgment scenes (Revelation 20:11–15) and depictions of Christ in majesty surrounded by the four evangelists and, on occasion, the 24 elders (Revelation 4:2–7) are by far the most common of the portal program themes found along or near the pilgrimage roads through France and Spain.[40] The establishment of a kingdom in heaven is illustrated by the coronation of the Virgin as the queen of heaven (fig. 16.4) and the parable of the ten virgins (fig. 16.8), whose destiny lies either within or barred from that kingdom. These themes function together to remind the viewer of his/her ultimate goal in the greater pilgrimage of life: the attainment of salvation through acceptance into kingdom of heaven, thereby reinforcing the pilgrim's current quest of seeking salvation through the act of pilgrimage.

Each time pilgrims passed across the liminal space of the church portal, they were reminded of the end of days and blessed by Christ directly through his appearance in the portal program as well as indirectly through the textual references implied by the image and its locus above a doorway.[41] Meaning was established through movement on the part of the pilgrim and gesture on the part of Christ who is presented over life-sized and often with right hand raised in the gesture of benediction. For example, in the Last Judgment scene from Saint-Foi, (fig. 16.1) Christ's right hand is raised in a gesture of salvation for those souls who are to be saved while his left hand is directed downward condemning the damned. In other examples such as Saint-Trôphime in Arles, Chartres west, and the Puerta de la Sarmental at Burgos (figs. 16.9, 16.7, and 16.2) Christ's right hand is raised with

[40] The most comprehensive study (at least in terms of images of the portal programs along the pilgrimage roads) remains Arthur Kinglsey Porter, *Romanesque Sculpture of the Pilgrimage Roads*, vols. 1–10 (Boston: Marshall Jones Company, 1923).

[41] Recht, *Believing and Seeing*, p. 239, stated that gestures were a reference to an "absent reality" which was affirmed by nothing but the gesture of the hand. For further reading on the gesture of benediction and the visual power of the arm, see Cynthia Hahn, "The Voices of the Saints: Speaking Reliquaries," *Gesta* 36 (1997), pp. 20–31.

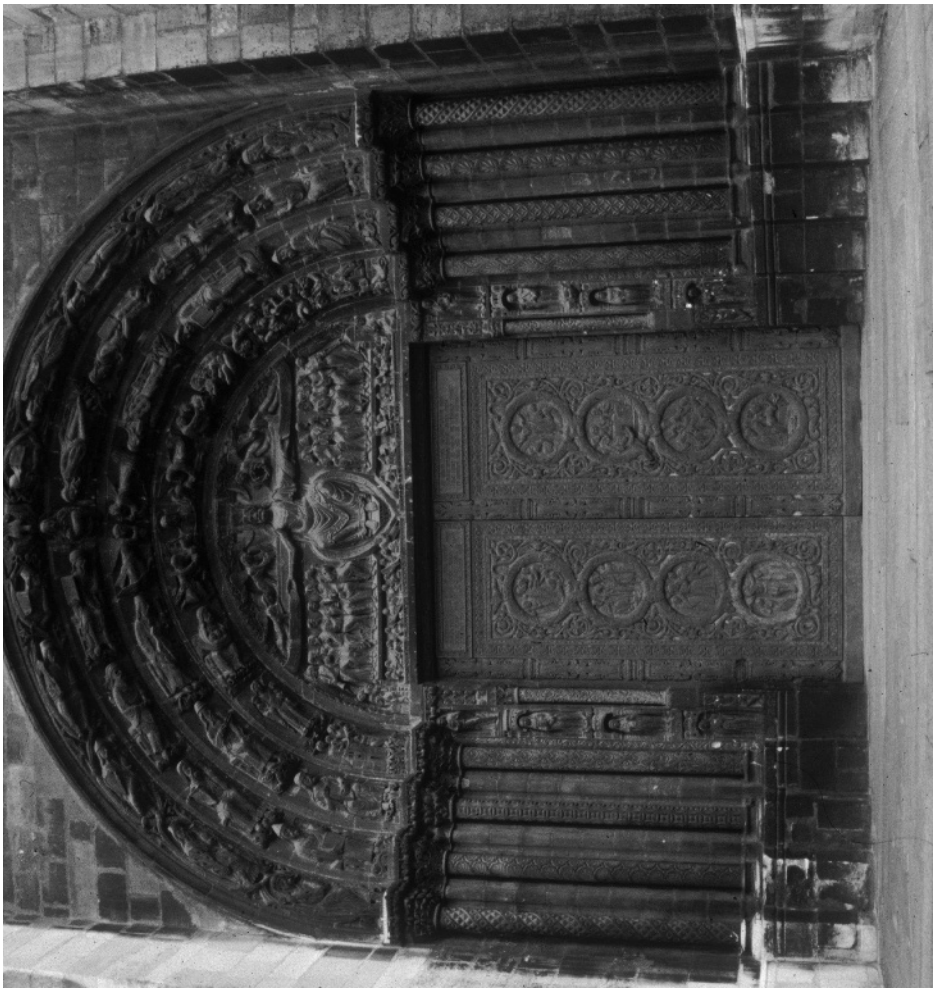

Fig. 16.8 The Wise and Foolish Virgins (*c.* 1140), west façade of Saint-Denis. Photo: author.

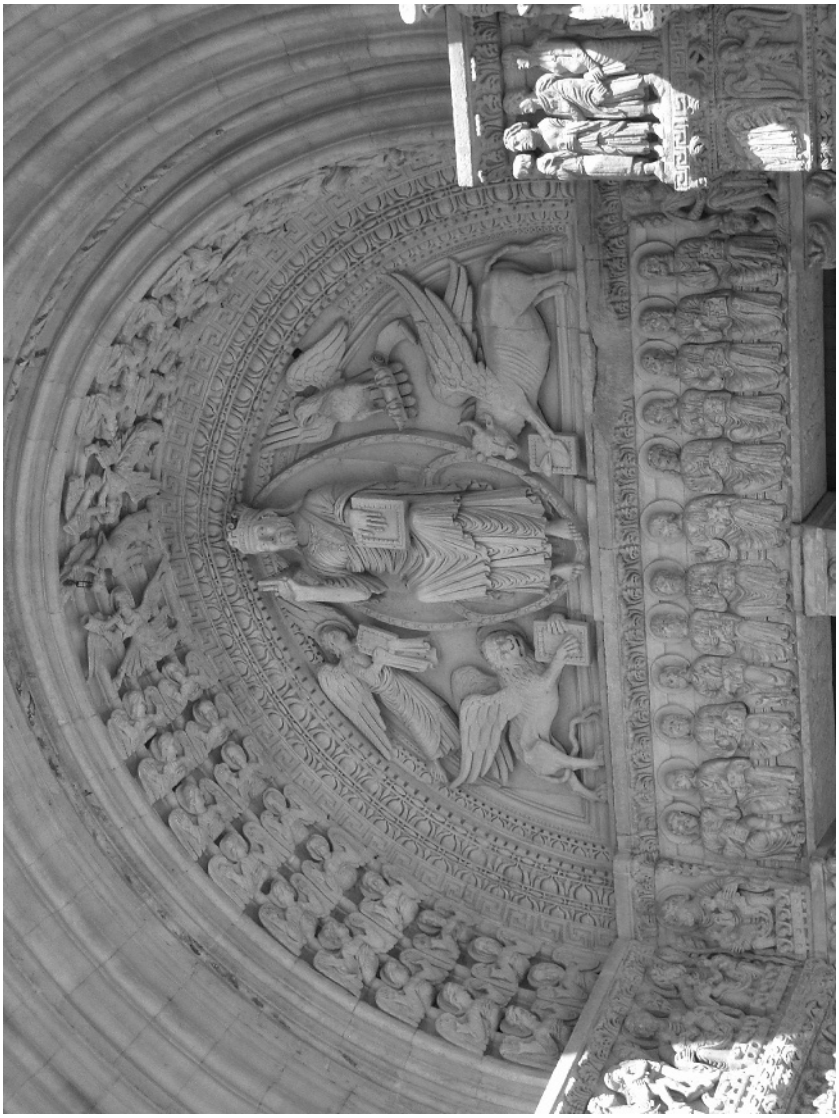

Fig. 16.9 Christ in Majesty (*c.* 1170-80), Saint-Trôphime, Arles. Photo: author.

index and middle fingers extended in the act of bestowing blessings upon the faithful who were to pass into the church (though the fingers of the extended hand at Chartres and Burgos have broken off). In all of these images, Christ is the central and largest figure in the composition, and the one who gazes out to engage the viewer, thereby directly commanding the attention of the spectator. Subsequently, the viewer's attention is drawn to the rest of the composition, which reinforces the meaning of Christ's gesture by referencing text from Revelation through the inclusion of the tetramorphs and in some cases the twenty-four elders. Thus, the reality of Christ's blessing and approval was made concrete through the triangulated interplay of image, text and action,[42] and the pilgrim was, through his or her movements, receiving the promise of admittance into heaven at the End of Days.

The Church as Heavenly Jerusalem

The church as a symbolic representation of the Heavenly Jerusalem was a convention that was both well known and widely developed in medieval theology.[43] It was both literally and figuratively an image of heaven, an image that was maintained through the dedication rite in which Revelation 21: 2–5 was read during the ceremony,[44] "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" and reiterated in the liturgy for the feast of the dedication of the cathedral in which the hymn *Urbs Hierusalem beata* was sung.[45] Paulinus of Nola

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[42] Günter Bandmann, for example, noted that, "Through its meaning…the medieval work of art was filled with power and concrete reality and was more intensely effective than an object intended merely as a metaphor." *Early Medieval Architecture as Bearer of Meaning*, tr. Kendall Wallis (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), p. 22.

[43] Bandmann, p. 70; Otto von Simson, *The Gothic Cathedral* (New York: Bollingen, 1956), pp. 8–10.

[44] According to Otto von Simson, "The church is mystically and liturgically, an image of heaven.…The authoritative language of the dedication ritual of a church explicitly relates the vision of the Celestial City, as described in the Book of Revelation, to the building that is to be erected." Otto von Simson, *The Gothic Cathedral* (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1962), p. 8, n. 20; see also Lawrence Stookey, "The Gothic Cathedral as Heavenly Jerusalem," *Gesta* 8 (1969), pp. 35–41.

[45] This hymn, using motifs from Revelation 21, compared the earthly structure of the church to "the city of Jerusalem, the blessed." Colleen McDannell and Bernhard Lang, *Heaven: A History* (Yale University Press: New Haven, 1988), p. 78.

(*c.* 354–431), noted that "…however earthly, [churches] are a blessed preparation for our own heavenly dwellings" thereby making a connection between the terrestrial church and the heavenly city already in the minds of the early Christian faithful. The medieval church, and the cathedral in particular, was a material attempt to recreate the divine specifications described in Revelation 21:13 with its reference to three gates or portals on each side of the heavenly city.[46] As Günter Bandmann perhaps best summed up, the church was not just a likeness of the Heavenly Jerusalem, but also the reality of the Heavenly Jerusalem because it is where the sacraments and relics were made manifest.[47] For the pilgrim, the church is the counterpart to the heavenly city, and the sculpted portal program, located above the doorway, reinforces the idea that Christ's blessing and salvation will be bestowed upon those who enter through the doorway.

Having considered the role image, text and movement played in elucidating salvific and heavenly doctrine for the pilgrim from the outside of the building and across the liminal opening of the doorway, what happens once the participant has entered into the building? How was the interactive and message-oriented experience of the exterior reinforced on the interior? To tackle these questions, I begin with the work of Daniel Connolly who addressed the function of the labyrinth at Chartres.[48] Connolly argued that the placement of the labyrinth in the center of the nave reinforces the idea of the centrality of Jerusalem in the world (the labyrinth here perceived as a simulacrum for the Jerusalem pilgrimage).[49] To support his thesis, Connolly referenced traditions that depict the church as a "microcosm of the universe" by seeing the interior space of the church as hierarchically represen-

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[46] Furthermore, according to Stephen Murray, *Notre Dame, Cathedral of Amiens: The Power of Change in Gothic* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 116–123, the crossing of the cathedral of Amiens is designed to the specifications in Revelation 21:16—"And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal."

[47] Bandmann, *Early Medieval Architecture*, p. 63. Similarly, the fourteenth century pilgrim Friar Fitzsimmons likened the shrine of Becket at Canterbury with the Heavenly Jerusalem by stating it was "…a case made of most pure gold and adorned with innumerable precious stones with shining pearls like unto the gate of Jerusalem…" in *Western Pilgrims: The Itineraries of Fr. Fitzsimmons (1322–23), A Certain Englishman (1344–45), Thomas Brygg (1392), and Notes on Authors and Pilgrims*, E. Hoade, ed. (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing Press, 1952, rpt. 1970), p. 3.

[48] Connolly, "At the Center of the World".

[49] Connolly, "At the Center of the World," p. 287.

tative of earth, the area of the nave and of heaven, the area of the sanctuary.[50] The movement of the pilgrim and his or her interaction with the surrounding space of the church is telling when considered in this context. The pilgrim passed along the nave, the earthly realm of the church, toward the sanctuary containing the altar and the relics, perceived as heaven. Once there, the pilgrim then returned along the nave and out the door back into the real world. In so doing, an eschatological message is signified via the pilgrim's physical performance of an *imitatio Christi*, ascending into heaven and returning—a symbolic reenactment of sacred history and the fulfilling of prophecy that was often reinforced by images on the portal depicting Christ's ascension into heaven and return at the end of time.[51] As before, a triangulated reading is necessary; in this case one which synthesizes image, movement and metaphor.

The idea of the pilgrim performing an *imitatio Christi* is further supported by complementary images of the depiction of the Road to Emmaus in, among others, a capital at Saint-Lazare at Autun studied by William Travis,[52] and in the cloister of Santo Domingo in Silos. (fig. 16.10) In this relief, Christ is dressed as a pilgrim and carries a scrip over his shoulder adorned with a cockleshell, signifying the Santiago pilgrimage, thereby drawing a parallel between Christ's journey to Emmaus and the pilgrimage to Santiago. Thus, we have a reversal

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[50] Connolly, "At the Center of the World," p. 305 refers to two traditions in particular, one being medieval liturgical plays in which scenes in the world and heaven are indicated by movement of the drama between the nave and the sanctuary (John Wesley Harris, *Medieval Theatre in Context: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 23–46), and the other being the *Mystagogia* of Maximus the Confessor (Byzantine theologian, *c*. 580–662) in which he wrote that the church building is symbolically representative of the different parts of the universe, "For it has the heaven like a sanctuary and the ordering of the earth like a nave…" Henry Maguire, *Earth and Ocean: The Terrestrial world in Early Byzantine Art* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1987), pp. 21–30.

[51] For a reference to the movement of the bishop in relation to Maximus' spatial divisions, see Robert Taft, "The Liturgy of the Great Church: An Initial Synthesis of Structure and Interpretation on the Eve of Iconoclasm," *Dumbarton Oakes Papers* 34 (1980–81), p. 71, in which he suggests that an "…*historico-eschatalogical* typology…is conditioned by his [Maximus'] allegorical view of the church as *type and image*…of the universe: the nave representing earthly realities and the sanctuary the heavenly. So the entrance of the bishop signifies the coming of Christ in the incarnation; his entrance into the sanctuary and ascent to the throne in the apse symbolize Christ's ascension and heavenly enthronement."

[52] William J. Travis, "The Journey to Emmaus Capital at Saint-Lazare of Autun," in *Art and Architecture of Late Medieval Pilgrimage*, eds. Blick and Tekippe, pp. 187–215.

Fig. 16.10 The Road to Emmaus (Christ as Pilgrim) (*c.* 1100), Santo Domingo in Silos. Photo: author.

of roles reflected through Christ's action as *imitatio peregrini*, complementing the pilgrims' performance of an *imitatio Christi*. Christ is the pilgrim as the pilgrim is Christ.

Conclusion

Deciphering images and how they may have been received and used by the medieval spectator is a complex endeavor, particularly when dealing with public imagery and by extension a large and diverse audience. In this case the location of the images above the doorway and the movement of the viewer in relation to the images and their location are keys to understanding the dynamic interaction between image and audience. While the images themselves are static, and the act of looking at them is essentially passive, the visual data transmitted by the images is literally brought to life by the movements, memories and desires of the spectators who play an active role in the eschatological drama. The doorway and its sculpture becomes the gateway to salvation, the entrance to the Heavenly Jerusalem, and the pilgrims' circulation through the interior space of the church allows them to experience Christ's own journey marking the end of time. Movement, memory, images and setting combined in the mind of the viewers to create a powerful metaphor for salvation; one that was reinforced through repeated images and repeated action on the part of the pilgrim at each stop along the journey.

17. THE GRAND PROCESSION AT TOURNAI: THE COMMUNITY WRIT LARGE

Rita Tekippe

Once the relationship between a saint and a community has been established, certain push-and-pull activities that express the cult become recurrent and expected, and they help to further define the symbiosis that characterizes a vibrant, thriving bond, further delineating what the parties might expect of one another in their liaison. One of the most well-defined and most lavishly-expressed alliances was that at Tournai, where the interactions between the body of citizens and the several locally-favored saints, led by the Virgin and Saint Eleutherius, were expressed through a myriad of activities, chief of which was an annual cortège, the Grand Procession, that has wound its way through the streets of the commune since 1092,[1] when a plague-like siege, threatening to decimate the community, pushed the citizenry into the streets, in a processional plea for mercy. As it has evolved, the event has pulled in pilgrims from the diocese and beyond who sought to participate and/or to be spectators. Its impact upon the civic community has also been profound and the associated (largely extant) art is abundant, lavish, and noteworthy. Interaction of the cathedral building, the processional artwork, and city landmarks has been emphatic. Better-documented than any other such medieval event, the Tournai procession facilitates exploration of such celebrations and allows us insight and opportunity for scholarly conjecture about such proceedings, and the art dedicated to expressing and enhancing relationships. Further examination of the cult objects and activities there can illuminate the ways in which the push and pull was manifested.

Like many processions, the later medieval (and ensuing) event at Tournai centered around a number of distinctive medieval works of art, notably the two thirteenth-century golden shrines—the one created by Nicholas of Verdun in honor of the Virgin Mary (fig. 17.1) and its companion reliquary for Tournai's Bishop-Patron Eleutherius.

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[1] Sometimes reported as 1090, generally agreed upon as 1092. The 8th-centennial celebration was held in 1992.

Fig. 17.1 Nicolas of Verdun. *Marian Shrine, Tournai*. Consecrated 1205. Cast and repoussé silver and copper gilt over a wooden core, with enamel, gems, vernis brun. 95 × 115 × 50.5 cm. Photo: author.

(fig. 17.2) Typically, these were the centerpieces of a body of works that accrued notable additions over the years. The third large reliquary (fig. 17.3) is post-medieval—the 1571 silver shrine of the Confraternity of the Damoiseaux, (made in Bruges), and was also dedicated to the cult of the Virgin. It replaced an earlier work as a newer or additional expression of the pervasive Marian devotion. The relics in that earlier shrine, prior to 1205, had been enclosed in a more modest container but little is known of its fabrication or appearance.[2] Before the appear-

[2] Edmond Wibaut, *Notice sur les origines et l'histoire de la grande procession de Tournai aussi appelée procession de l'exaltation de la sainte croix* (Tournai: Imprimerie

Fig. 17.2 *Reliquary Châsse of Bishop Eleutherius*. 1247. Repoussé and cast copper gilt over wooden core, with enamel, gems; engraving, 110 × 137 × 70 cm. Photo: author.

ance of the newer Damoiseaux shrine, its contents were encased in a wooden casket, created in 1280, which was renewed each year for the Grand Procession, with paint and draperies. The iconography of these

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Leclercq-Snyders, 1892), Editeur, 1–3. According to Jean Dumoulin and Jacques Pycke. *La Grande Procession de Tournai (1092–1992) une réalité religieuse, urbaine, diocesane, sociale, économique et artistique*. Vol. 6, Tournai—art et histoire. (Tournai: Fabrique de l'Église Cathédrale de Tournai, 1992) although, since the 14th century, it was generally erroneously believed that this reliquary contained relics associated with the Virgin, it actually has always been a receptacle for some of the principle relics venerated at the cathedral, according to the custom of the time of the container's fabrication—of local and distant saints, of Saint Ursula and her companions, and

Fig. 17.3 *Reliquary Shrine of the Damoiseaux*. 1571. Silver repoussé over wooden core. 77.5 × 87 × 46 cm. Photo: IRPA.

three large châsses is interrelated and further linked to the statements of the cults within the church. A brief examination of the pictorial programs of those shrines will show the shaded richness of the devotion in the cathedral and the diocese, and its pervasive popularity.

Saints Niçaise, Remi, Piat, Eloi, Amand, Bavon, Bertin, Trond (all western), and the eastern saints Theodore, George, Demetrius, John, Chrysostom, as well as relics from the Apostles and from pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Jean Dumoulin, ed. *Trésors Sacrés* (Tournai: Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Tournai, 1971), p. 100.

The shrine of the Virgin, (fig. 17.1) created by Nicholas of Verdun and consecrated in 1205, sets the tone for all three works in terms of shape and size, which is somewhat different from the standard for the type in the era. Usually, these large works had the general form of a coffin, with implications that they contained the bodily remains of the honored saint, even though many of them housed only part of the relics. The design also generally refers to the evolving ecclesiastical architecture of the age, bearing features increasingly similar to Gothic churches in certain decorative details. Here the implications function powerfully in processional rites, when the precious contents of the sanctuary are carried out into the community, dispersing the blessings of the sanctified space. But the Marian Shrine need not resemble the coffin since the corporeal remains were not the intended contents. Nicholas' shrine was not as long as a coffin box, being proportionately somewhat wider and higher, creating a pronounced sense of presence and display.[3] Dedicated to Mary and Sts. Piat and Niçaise, its program includes episodes from the life of Mary, from the public life of Christ, and from his Passion and the Resurrection period, all arrayed along the sides in architectural niches, and on the roof, in roundels. Other shrine motifs include angels, prophets, and the evangelist symbols. One end of the reliquary features Christ as Pantokrator, flanked by angels while, on the other, the enthroned Virgin and Child are receiving the Magi.[4]

Depictions on the Eleutherian châsse include an enthroned effigy of the Bishop as the founder of the diocesan seat at Tournai, and as successor to the apostles. Emphasis is placed on his service to God in combating heresy, as well as on the dedication of the cathedral church to the Virgin. One gable includes the enthroned Christ, treading beasts

[3] For a full discussion of shapes and sizes of the larger reliquaries, see Marie-Guy Boutier and Paul Bruyére, eds., *Trésors d'art au pays de Visé et Saint-Hadelin* (Visé: Wagelmans, 1998), s.a.

[4] Dietrich Kötzsche, "Zum Stand der Forschung der Goldschmiedekunst des 12. Jahrhunderts im Rhein-Maas-Gebiet" in *Rhein und Maas: Kunst und Kultur 800–1400* (ed.) A. Legner (Köln: Schnütgen-Museum, 1973), p. 323. The dedication including Sts. Niçaise and Piat recognizes their important roles in the history of Christianity in the diocese and region, and these saints are included in many other ways in the overall cult display in the cathedral building and in processional works from Tournai and other diocesan churches.

Fig. 17.4a *Christ Enthroned from Reliquary Châsse of Bishop Eleutherius*. 1247. Repoussé and cast copper gilt over wooden core, with enamel, gems; engraving. 110 × 137 × 70 cm. Photo: author.

Fig. 17.4b *Church Model held by Eleutherius*, detail from *Reliquary Châsse of Bishop Eleutherius*. 1247. Repoussé and cast copper gilt over wooden core, with enamel, gems; engraving. 110 × 137 × 70 cm. Photo: author.

Fig. 17.4c *John the Baptist*, detail from *Reliquary Châsse of Bishop Eleutherius*. 1247. Repoussé and cast copper gilt over wooden core, with enamel, gems; engraving. 110 × 137 × 70 cm. Photo: author.

underfoot, holding a banner in one hand with the other hand raised. (fig. 17.4a) An analogous image of Eleutherius, with his staff and a model of his church, appears on the other gable. (fig. 17.4b) The sides and roofs of the shrine include images of apostles, John the Baptist (fig. 17.4c), the Virgin and Gabriel at the Annunciation, and the personified Ecclesia and Synagoga. (figs. 17.5a, 17.5b, 17.5c) Warichez[5] describes this *fierte*[6] as a demonstration of the essence of the *"belle epoque de l'art ogival"* which, here, is the image of a small chapel

[5] Joseph Warichez, *S. Eleuthère, premiere évêque de Tournai* (Wetteren: de Meester. 1931), p. 61.

[6] A portable reliquary châsse, from the Latin *feretrum*, a bier for carrying a corpse.

Fig. 17.5a *Gabriel & Mary of the Annunciation*, detail from *Reliquary Châsse of Bishop Eleutherius*. 1247. Repoussé and cast copper gilt over wooden core, with enamel, gems; engraving. 110 × 137 × 70 cm. Photo: author.

dedicated to the triumph of death, enhanced with inscriptions inspired by the most ardent spiritualism.[7]

The materials, technique, and craft of each of these two thirteenth-century shrines are similar, although they differ considerably in certain stylistic elements. Both include gold and silver, gilt copper, enamels, and jewels. The crests are elaborate filigree work, as is the framing of the tri-lobe niches, which seem to have been inspired by the trefoil architectural motif of the lateral portals of the cathedral building. (Fig. 17.6a) Those portal designs are, according to Schwartzbaum, unique to Tournai and derive from goldsmiths' work (as seen on previous reliquary shrines) and so they served to enhance a sense of the Tournai cathedral building as a large reliquary itself.[8] This rich reciprocity of the idea of shrine as church, and church as shrine, also

[7] He goes on to express the (debatable) belief that the religious sentiment and the negligence of contemporaries explain why so few names of the great artists of the Middle Ages are known to us. In his assertion, the fabricators of such works did not seek glory, rather they worked for God alone. Moreover, many of them may have been monks, with imposed anonymity, according to the rules which required humility. Warichez (1931), p. 62.

[8] Elizabeth Schwartzbaum, "The Romanesque Sculpture of the Cathedral of Tournai" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1977), p. 29.

Fig. 17.5b *Ecclesia*, detail from *Reliquary Châsse of Bishop Eleutherius*. 1247. Repoussé and cast copper gilt over wooden core, with enamel, gems; engraving. 110 × 137 × 70 cm. Photo: author.

Fig. 17.5c *Synagoga*, detail from *Reliquary Châsse of Bishop Eleutherius*. 1247. Repoussé and cast copper gilt over wooden core, with enamel, gems; engraving. 110 × 137 × 70 cm. Photo: author.

emphasized by the tower motifs on church building and along the rooflines of the shrine, (fig. 17.5a) is a recurrent theme in the thirteenth century in Tournai as elsewhere.[9] The third major châsse reliquary, the Shrine of the Damoiseaux (fig. 17.3) was a Renaissance-era expression. While its size, shape and proportions are consistent with the two large thirteenth-century reliquaries, its different material and techniques strongly distinguish it, even though the pictorial program is similarly inspired in part, with depictions of episodes from the life of the Virgin along the lower sides. The roof is covered with rinceaux, and on the forward end, as it is carried, is an image of the Virgin, surrounded by the rays of the sun and standing upon the crescent moon.

This variegated cult of the Virgin has always been paramount in Tournai, and made evident through many other works, as well. The initial Grand Procession, in 1092, is reputed to have centered around an image of Notre Dame des Malades, no longer extant, but this guise of Mary was depicted in a fourteenth-century version now seen at the center of the western porch[10] (fig. 17.6b) and a replica of that statue which is still carried in the Grande Procession.[11] As at other cult centers, the custom of procession with relics and accoutrements surely began centuries before these particular shrines and cult objects were created; perhaps from the time of elevation of the saint or another now-obscure occasion, involving the gathering of associated items which expressed the myriad cults, as is the case with now-numerous Marian Tournai shrines and images. Never meant to be containers for the Virgin's body or bones, since the Assumption obviated that possibility, rather they differently reflected the cult by being a repository of other items locally associated with Mary—sometimes brandea (such as veil or chemise) or substances reputed to be Mary's milk, or her hair, or items from a community Marian cult—even documents

[9] Perhaps most notably at the Sainte Chapelle in Paris, created in the same period as the reliquary shrine for Saint Eleutherius. It must be noted that, on the later shrine, the niches along the sides are differently proportioned—narrower than those on the Marian shrine, and they frame single figures of the apostles as opposed to the multi-figure scenes from the life of Mary.

[10] See Dumoulin and Pycke (1992), p. 60.

[11] Images of the Virgin from various periods were/are carried in the annual procession, including a later version of Notre Dame des Malades, and a work called Notre Dame de la Brune, both of which have traditionally been supplied with special robes for the occasion. In the modern period, the procession has included pilgrims from parishes all over the diocese, who process with images of their local Marian cults or of their patron saints, or with reliquaries.

Fig. 17.6a *Porte Mantile, Tournai Cathedral*, south façade. 13th century. Photo: author.

Fig. 17.6b *Notre Dame des Malades, Tournai Cathedral*, trumeau, west façade. 14th century. Photo: author.

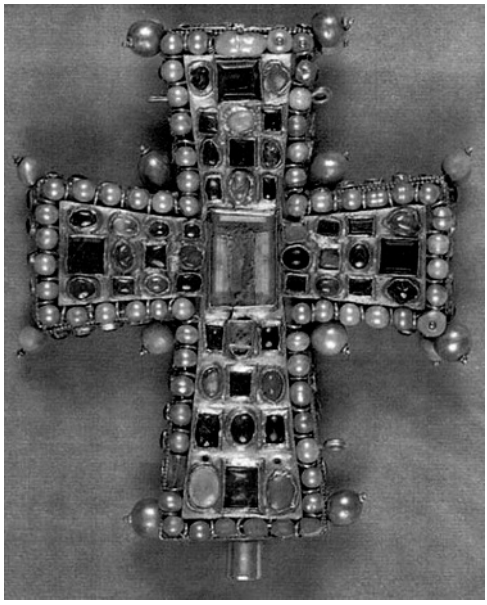
linked to her veneration and relics of other saints, as was the case at Tournai. Regardless of the specific bent of a cult, the long tradition of transportation of the relics of venerated saints or veneration itself set the stage for these magnificent works, both large and small, and their roles in dynamic pageants, in association with rites and ceremonial proceedings, which were themselves signifiers, such as the annual Grand Procession at Tournai.

Alongside accruals, certain items fell into disuse, as the essence of a thriving cult dictated that expression be constituted of both treasured traditions and vigorous new articulation. Events and proceedings included a network of rites and ceremonies taking place over a several-day span, considerably extended by the preparations needed around the core community and by its affiliated groups throughout region and diocese. All of these objects and measures were integral to the fabric of visual spectacle of the event and perhaps even more so to its soul, since they were the evidence of the cult spirit shared. The performative nature of such procession, and its significance as expression of the Christian community make it an extremely potent and definitive art form in itself—presenting a singular and momentary view of the cult, besides being saturated with its own history and traditions, and was always perceived and experienced as referring to its own rich expressive past, as well as to its future.

The oldest processional object used at Tournai was probably the Byzantine cross reliquary containing a relic of the True Cross.[12] (fig. 17.7) This richly-jeweled piece (8th–9th century) was a gift of (Flemish) Emperor Baudouin IX of Constantinople.[13] The treasured cross, recently carried in procession by a priest, was once provided with its own baldacchino It is typical of each work of art that serves as a focal point within the procession in that it is not only a singularly remarkable artistic object, but is imbued with its own history and traditions and consequent implications for the community and

[12] Unfortunately, this object was recently stolen in a smash-and-grab robbery of the Tournai Cathedral Treasury. Among the many online reports is the one at http://medievalnews.blogspot.com/2008/02/byzantine-cross-stolen-from-cathedral.html.

[13] Paul Rolland, *Histoire de Tournai* (Tournai: Casterman, 1956), p. 76. Baudouin gifted the cross through the agency of the Tournaisian chevalier Jean Bliauc, who had accompanied him on the 1204 Sack of Constantinople. Rolland also reported that Baudouin, as count of Flanders, along with his wife, Marie de Champagne, had been present at the 1095 procession in Tournai, and further credits him as possible donor of the funds for the châsse of Notre Dame.



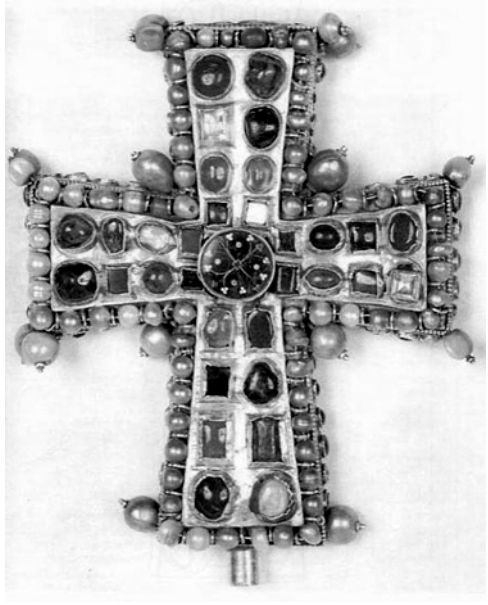


Fig. 17.7 *Byzantine Reliquary Cross* (stolen 2008). 8th–9th century. Gold-sheathed wood, pearls, gems, enamels. 20 × 20 cm. obverse, reverse. Photos: author.

the event. Rich complexity is accrued and amplified, fostering the personal and communal experiences, while feeding anticipation for future effects. Since many of the ritual objects that appear, each with its own group of devotees, in the Grand Procession as well as other events each year, come into the city from other civic/cultic entities throughout the region, the gathering also implies their harmony and gregarious interdependence.

The homage to Christ and the Cross, a strongly apparent sub-theme of the procession, is also shown through two other ritual elements—the carrying of the *Initia* of the Gospels, and the conveyance of the Eucharist in a monstrance, under a canopy.[14] While the inclusion of the Holy Sacrament was added in the later Middle Ages, after the establishment of the Corpus Christi feast in the region, the practice of reading the *Initia* is documented from at least the thirteenth century.[15] The reading of the Gospels at stations or at the city gates purified and sanctified the public realms, and the same Scripture book was used for the blessing of the sick, another feature of the celebration rites which, in their entirety, had connotations of seeking such benediction.[16] From at least the year 1293, a nocturnal penitential march included this chanting of the beginnings of the four Gospels at the four corners of the city.

Two other items of note are both fine examples of the art of the goldsmith, connected with the confraternity of the Damoiseaux—the fourteenth century torch,[17] and the fifteenth century morse. (fig. 17.8) The torch/reliquary was a permanent symbol of the traditional great offering candle given annually by each confraternity. It is covered with fifty-eight enameled coats-of-arms, representing the family crests of

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[14] Cathédrale Notre-Dame, *Cathédrale Notre Dame de Tournai1* (1971). *Horae Tornacenses: Receuil d'études d'histoire publiées a l'occasion du VIII^e^ centenaire de la consécration de la Cathédrale de Tournai* (Tournai: Casterman), p. 12.

[15] This lectionary custom formerly involved the use of another very early work, now found in the cathedral treasury—the tenth-eleventh century ivory diptych of Saint Niçaise, which once graced the covers of the Gospel Book. Dating of these pieces is much-disputed, with suggestions ranging from the 7th up to the 11th century. Niçaise had been an early patron of Tournai, until his relics were stolen, leading to the adoption of Eleutherius as patron. See Paul Rolland, *Histoire de Tournai* (Tournai: Casterman, 1956), p. 53.

[16] Sabine Felbecker, *Die Prozession: Historische und systematische Untersuchungen zu einer liturgischen Ausdruckshandlung*. Vol. 39, Münsteraner Theologische Abhandlungen. Altenberg: Oros Verlag ecker, 1995), p. 415.

[17] See Dumoulin and Pycke (1992), p. 37.

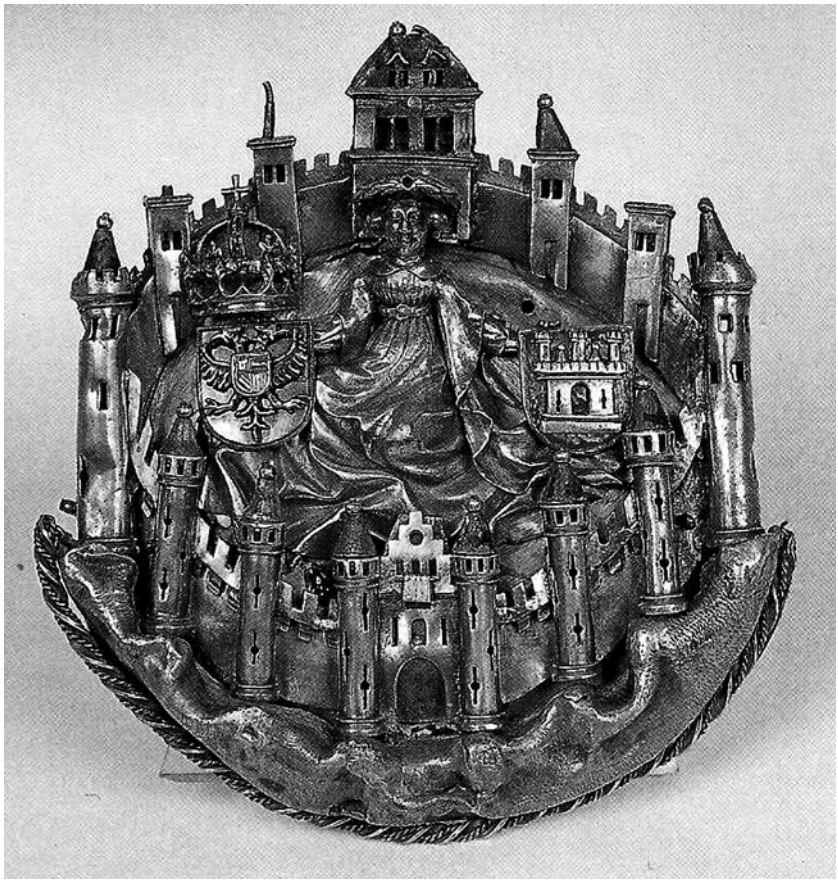

Fig. 17.8 *Morse of the Damoiseaux: Personification of the Commune of Tournai*. 1480. Silver repoussé, parcel gilt, enamels. 15 × 14 cm. Photo: IRPA.

the aristocratic members of the group.[18] The morse or *Quignon des Damoiseaux*, worn as a cape closure for by the confraternity provost, bears a personification of the city of Tournai—a young seated woman, framed in the city walls, with the river flowing outside. In her hands are the shields of the city and of the kingdom of France, surmounted by a sixteenth-century addition of the arms of the Empire, with the imperial

[18] Dumoulin and Jacques Pycke. (1992), p. 37. Some of crests are later additions, up through the 16th century. The reliquary component is also of this later period—the little window in the roof, which houses a fragment of a holy candle of Arras.

crown atop it, supplied during the reign of Charles V.[19] This poetic conception of the city of Tournai, as depicted on the golden morse, is notably similar to the fifteenth-century seal of the City of Tournai and to other typical medieval representations of the Heavenly Jerusalem as are often seen in manuscript illuminations and elsewhere.[20]

The interactive push-and-pull between saints and devotees was expressed within the cathedral and when the shrines were carried out in procession. The Eleutherian châsse, consecrated in 1247, was initially placed in the choir, along with that of the Virgin, near the main altar, where it was visited by the faithful for all manner of prayer—in joy and sorrow, in petition and thanksgiving—and whence it was carried through the cathedral and its precincts, and out through the city and its environs, for certain occasions.

Special feast days were traditionally accompanied by a special ceremony, which included sounding of the great bell, a great profusion of lights, and solemn chants.[21] The significance of these rites was not simply religious, as the saint was invoked for diverse civic, political, and social events.[22]

The history of procession of the Eleutherius shrine in Tournai also predates the eleventh-century institution of the Grand Procession and is perhaps rooted in events of the life of the Bishop-saint which, according to the several *vitae*, included his return from Rome with relics of Saint Stephen and of Saint Mary of Egypt, on which occasion he was greeted by a solemn cortege of clerics in festive garb.[23] The account of a solemn transportation of his remains—the 531 funeral

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[19] Dumoulin and Pycke (1992), p. 36.

[20] Discussion of both city and church ((building on Augustine's notion of the City of God and both Old and New Testament imagery in Ezekiel and Revelations), abounds, both in the Middle Ages, and in later scholarly investigation. See, for example, Nicola Coldstream, *Medieval Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 152 ff.

[21] Joseph Warichez, *S. Eleuthère, premiere évêque de Tournai* (Wetteren: de Meester, 1931), p. 64. The procession might have been a tool used by the Tournasian bishop in his anti-Arian efforts, as it was known to have been so used elsewhere during the era, most notably, a century earlier, by Saint John Chrysostom, who led nocturnal marches around the walls at Constantinople. Although there is reference in the vitae of Eleutherius to fasting and vigil in Tournai to counter the heresy, there is no documentation to support this conjecture about procession.

[22] Warichez (1931), p. 64.

[23] Joseph Warichez, *Les Origines de l'église de Tournai* (Louvain: Typographie Charles Peeters, 1902), p. 113; Anonymous. 1863a. "de S. Eleutherio Episcopo Tornacensi in Belgio." in *Acta Sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur*. Johannes Boland, ed. (Paris: V. Palme, 1845).

cortege—from the site of his martyrdom at the cathedral, to the burial site at Saint Peter's Church in nearby Blandain, is the first notation of a post-mortem march for Eleutherius.[24] It is further mentioned in a poem by Milon, written *c.* 850 about Saint Niçaise, who was the patron saint of the city and cathedral at that time. During the period of somnolence for the Eleutherian cult, Niçaise, the celebrated martyr/Bishop of Reims, whose relics had been divided between Noyon and Tournai, was honored with a châsse, and celebrated in literature. His relics were reportedly taken along when the clergy fled the Normans in 881, and brought back when they returned home to Tournai in 892.[25] The *inventio* accounts[26] for Eleutherius and his bishopric mention celebration and miracles and the relocation of the saint's relics, in their châsse, from his resting place at Blandain to the city of Tournai in 1064. This included a grand cortege of all the clergy, and a great crowd of the faithful, led by Bishop Baudouin, to the great exultation of the whole city, and affirmed by the occurrence of many miracles.

The climate in which the Grand Procession at Tournai was initiated apparently included the custom of procession in a variety of circumstances in the region, not all of them well-documented.[27] This most momentous processional event for Tournai was that of the aforementioned 1092 response to epidemic,[28] when Bishop Radbod II of Tournai/Noyon called all of the faithful to the cathedral and gave a

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[24] E. Guiberto, *S. Eleutherius Tornacensis Episcopatus* in J.P. Migne (ed.), *Patrologia Cursus Completus*. Series Latina vol. 65 (Parisiis: Garnier Freres, 1857), p. 74.

[25] Warichez (1931), pp. 51–53. The poem by Milon is in *MGH, Poetae latini aevi Carolini*, III, p. 589. M. Adolphe Hocquet, Maurice Houtart, Walther Ravez, E.-J. Soil de Moriamé, "Tournai dans l'art et dans l'histoire," Wallonia XXI/5–6 (1913), pp. 315–428, esp. 322, tells us that the Tournaisians fled with the relics of Eleutherius, and while some of the vitae support the possibility of this, the general consensus is that the relics of Eleutherius were not raised until 897.

[26] Anonymous. 1863a, "de S. Eleutherio Episcopo Tornacensi in Belgio" in *Acta Sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur*. This compilation of the vitae includes that by Guiberto. See note. 20 above.

[27] A procession in honor of the Virgin and Child, preceded by fast and vigil, was reported at Valenciennes in 1008, and a similar account comes from Messines, in 1060. Both of these were inspired by visions granted to local clerics. Similar accounts are reported throughout this period, and may have influenced the clergy at Tournai to adapt the practice to their needs, if it was not already part of their repertoire. There was in place, as well, the custom of visitation by groups of pilgrims from throughout Flanders to the Virgin at Tournai, in homage and petition. At any rate, the Grand Procession clearly did not appear in a vacuum, rather it seems to have been a familiar ritual in such circumstances.

[28] Described by several authors as a type of gangrenous ergotism, which has been cited as a cause for plague in other instances in medieval Europe.

sermon which indicted their habits and filled them with terror. He was especially critical of the young people, blaming them for too great a love of pleasure and too little care for their souls, and calling upon them to cut their hair and curtail the frivolity of their raiment. Radbod called for a night of fast and vigil, followed by barefoot procession with the relics around the city. The whole population is reported to have participated.[29] This initial ritual[30] was described as efficacious against the epidemic, and the gratitude of the citizenry led them to re-enact the ceremony annually thereafter. Procession was a frequent response in other times of need and celebration.[31] Featured in that 1092 procession, were the "precious chests from the cathedral, which had contained, for some thirty years already, the relics of Eleutherius and other saints."[32] This would indicate the fabrication of reliquaries at the time of the translation from Blandain to Tournai, presumably containers that were suitable for such transportation.

From its inception, the Grand Procession had a three-dimensional character in its dedications: devotion to the Virgin and Child, worship of the Cross, and homage to the celestial court, and these same three cults were emphasized within the cathedral itself.[33] In later centuries, the veneration of the Holy Sacrament was added, following the institution and general enthusiasm for the piety associated with the Corpus Christi feast in the thirteenth century.[34] Overall, the Tournaisian pro-

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[29] Paul Rolland, *Histoire de Tournai* (Tournai: Casterman, 1956), p. 53. Rolland is credited with being the chief scholar in the history of Tournai, but unfortunately was not given to citing his sources. Moreover, many of the archives which were available to him have since been destroyed.

[30] Commemorated in the monumental 1882 painting *La peste de Tournai*, by Louis Gallait. (Musée des Beaux-Arts à Tournai).

[31] There is some dispute as to whether the first procession was in 1090 or 1092, since the plague is known to have been a problem in this region from 1089 on, but the 1092 date has gained general acceptance, if only by tradition. The lack of clarity may be related to confusion of the two associated feasts, the Invention of the Cross, in May, and the Exaltation of the Cross, in September. Whereas the procession was originally held in May, it was later shifted to September. See Dumoulin, and Pycke. (1992), p. 18. Alfred Cauchie, *La Grande Procession de Tournai* (Louvain: Ch. Peeters, Libriare-Éditeur, 1892), pp. 9–12, takes up this problem as well, stating that such an epidemic was known across the region from France to Germany from 1089 until 1095, and is mentioned in chronicles from Hanover, Gembloux, Hildesheim, Aachen, Cologne, Lobbes, etc.

[32] Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992), p. 16. See the discussion of this issue in the treatment of the cult of Eleutherius.

[33] Cathédrale Notre-Dame, Tournai, *Gloria Mariae—Statues et reliquaires portés à la Grande Procession de Tournai* (Tournai: Casterman, 1992), p. 10.

[34] Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992), p. 79.

cessional rite was conceived as an entreaty for assistance from all possible sources, but since the Virgin was the dedicatrix of the cathedral and chief patroness of Tournai, her cult dominated, not only as an expression of the city of Tournais, but also for many of the visiting pilgrim/participants.[35] The cult of the Cross was a close second, since the annual rite was associated with the two Holy Cross feasts—that of the *Inventio*, and that of the Exaltation of the Cross.[36] Early on, the procession was traditionally held in May, and was linked to a number of traditional feasts, including those for the Cross, the cathedral dedication, and the customary Pentecost pilgrimage by filial parishes, as well as the annual market fairs which were held during Pentecost week.[37] By the fourteenth century, the celebration was shifted to September, to the feast of Mary's birthday.

The observation quickly gained favor with the growing Christian community in Tournai, accruing a variety of customs and features which reflected the community, not only in its Christian habits, but also in its trades and professions, its social customs, and its civic structure. The route and composition of the cavalcade is not known for each and every year, and is especially obscure for the early centuries, but a fair amount of data enables some reconstruction of early practice. According to Cauchie, the route was varied from year to year, according to taste, and was also determined by the existence of war or peace. In times of war, the circuit was confined inside the walls, and in really harsh conditions, was limited to the cathedral precincts, or even the cathedral building. In peace, it was possible to process outside the walls, and even to extend the routes.[38] Parish churches and other

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[35] Cathédrale Notre Dame de Tournai (1992). *Gloria Mariae* includes the many exemplars in contemporary celebrations.

[36] See notes 1 and 27 above.

[37] Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992), p. 19. This author believes the reason for the shift from May to September is because competition with the secular feasts and fairs in the spring and because of the decline of the Pentecost offering pilgrimages.

[38] Alfred Cauchie, *La Grande Procession de Tournai.* (Louvain: Ch. Peeters, Libriare-Éditeur, 1892), pp. 46–48. Cauchie writes that, from the beginning, the procession went, as a rule, around the city and its exterior, whenever possible, and went out the second valley gate and through the Saint Martin Gate. (p. 15) He says "without doubt" but it must be noted that sources are lacking to substantiate this. At the earliest period, according to Rolland, (1956), p. 48, the right bank of the Escaut was part of old Brabant, a region of Lotharingia and was not considered part of Tournai, rather part of the Germanic Empire, while the left bank was within the realm of the French Empire. At that time, the river also separated the ecclesiastical domains of Tournai

religious institutions such as the leprosy at Val d'Orcq and the Abbey of St. Martin were among the regular stational points along the route.

The primary event at Tournai formerly included three separate processions, apparently from at least the fourteenth century, as the directives in the *Liber fabricae ecclesiae Tornacensis* required.[39] Each event had a separate starting time, a different goal, and a distinct purpose. The first started out at midnight from the cathedral, led by a priest bearing the Byzantine cross reliquary, followed by a crowd of pilgrims, in a sortie which recalled and honored the Passion of Christ, including events[40] which sought the mercy of God by making a circuit around the city, reminding them that each man must carry his cross in the course of his terrestrial life.[41] The penitential tenor of this segment stands in contrast to the glittery second procession, which began a similar tour of the countryside, on the return of the first to the church. Leaving at four in the morning (canonical Matins), led by the visiting citizens of Ghent, carrying banners, torches, and the châsse of Notre Dame, (fig. 17.1) with a rich canopy that they renewed annually,[42] they were followed by a great crowd. On the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, there was a third, triumphal cortège, which reiterated the first two, by honoring the Cross, Notre Dame des Malades, and the statues and reliquaries of the various patron saints from other cities of the diocese, as directed by Bishop Radbod II in 1096. The *Liber fabricae* elaborates the details by defining the starting hour as that at which Christ had gone out of Jerusalem carrying the cross on his shoulders, and directing that the people should go out of the cathedral, with honor and devotion, led by the celebrant carrying the True Cross reliquary, followed by prelates, canons, religious, priests and clerks, citizens, men and women, pilgrims and strangers. By the time Cousin wrote his history of Tournai in 1620, the vestiges of the triple procession were observed by the breaking of a single procession into parts, which separated at the Abbey of Saint Martin into three groups, processing thence in separate directions and then returning to rejoin at

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and Cambrai. Contemporary rites are carried out within the city, but do include a foray across the river, according to Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992), p. 30.

[39] Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992), p. 30.

[40] Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992), pp. 74–76. Unfortunately the events are not further described.

[41] Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992), p. 74.

[42] Rolland, (1956), p. 54. Others also discuss the participation of the people of Ghent, and I will take this up again below.

the abbey, to return as a unit to the cathedral.[43] Rolland describes the third segment as being reserved for the religious and civil authorities and prominent institutions of Tournai.[44] Eventually, by the end of the seventeenth century, it seems, the whole of the procession became unified, as it is today.[45] It serves, in each format, to express, at once, the community's multiplicity and its diversity along with its devotional spirit with regard to the saints and the Church. Moreover, it reflects a sort of self-awareness and assertion of the parts of itself as a collective. The changes in forms and routes over times are clear evidence of a living, changing fervor that ever sought fresh articulation.

The custom of the vigil for the Grand Procession has endured. It is an apparent occasion for participants to re-focus from their mundane lives to the sacred atmosphere of this particular community event. Cauchie describes the 1992 eighth-centenary commemoration as traditional: opening with Vespers, after which the city authorities, the *serment* officers, and the Damoiseaux confraternity members brought offerings to the altars of Notre Dame and of Saint Anne, where candles would burn night and day. These practices were followed by the chanting of the Office of the Dead for victims of a 1276 accident in which pilgrims were crushed to death during the procession, with their remains being interred in the cathedral cloister.[46] This rite of recollection also included commemoration of casualties of a similar press in 1229, as well as of those who succumbed to the 1092 epidemic and were buried near the then-vacant chapel of Saint Martin outside the city, at the behest of the chapter.[47]

Parishes, *Guilds*, Serments, *and Other Groups*

Over time, the Grand Procession was increasingly organized along the lines of the groups who participated, each with distinctive identity. This complex constituency, whose evolution seems to reflect the evolution of the increasingly urban entity of Tournai, was a vital framework for the fabric of the visual spectacle. Each unit was centered around

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[43] Jean Cousin, *Histoire de Tournay* 4 vols. (Douay: Marc Wyon, 1619), IV, p. 136.
[44] Rolland, (1956), p. 54.
[45] Rolland, (1956), p. 54.
[46] Cauchie, pp. 23–24.
[47] Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992), pp. 29–30.

a focal point or theme—be it a reliquary or image, or a theme which characterizes the membership, such as the later medieval *serments*, or men-at-arms. From early on, a sense of pomp and ceremony was strongly characteristic, as it was of many Tournaisian events, where a sense of chivalry and pageantry was in evidence in military trappings, costumes, and many special decorations.[48] The taste for splendor and spectacle was seen not only in the processions, but in the fairs and fêtes so popular in the city, as well as the sumptuous and abundant artwork and decoration associated with every affair. Tournai, long a center for textile production, ornamented much of the display with luxurious and brightly-colored fabrics—especially in costumes which connoted the roles of groups of participants, in banners and flags, in drapes for biers and shrines, and in attire for the sacred statues. Today, those who live along the processional route may obtain oriflammes from the organizing committee to decorate their houses, and everyone in the city is encouraged to hang banners or drapes to reinforce the sense of festivity.[49] The dynamism of the arts in Tournai has also been evident in the great number of artisans, founders, fabricators, etc., who were known contributors and participants, both as individuals and as guild members.

In addition to the clerical wishes for great spiritual success, a strong civic system supported events that brought political and economic benefits to the community. While the clergy issued invitations promising considerable spiritual rewards, and emphasizing the solemnity of the occasion, the civic authorities helped with publicity and assured the potential pilgrims of ample hospitality, fair prices, and safe-conduct.[50] While reports of attendance numbers are suspect (much as in most hagiographic accounts), it is noteworthy that they are particularly extravagant for Tournai. The mid-twelfth-century chronicler-monk Herman of Saint Martin reports that there were 60,000 already by 1094, while there were 100,000 in the year 1140—which he bemoans as increasing the frivolity, creating an atmosphere which attracted young noblemen and cavaliers to what they perceived as an occasion for play and races.[51]

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[48] Rolland, (1956), p. 58.

[49] *http://users.belgacom.net/Grande_Procession_Tournai/participer_obtenir_oriflammes.html.*

[50] Cauchie, pp. 16–17. This will be dealt with in greater detail below.

[51] Cauchie, pp. 13–14. See also Lynn Nelson (ed.), *Herman of Tournai: The Restoration of the Monastery of Saint Martin of Tournai, Medieval Texts in Translation*

While it is not possible to discuss all of the groups and types of participation for the procession, perusal of a few brings insight into the make-up of the whole. One of the most frequently mentioned groups of participants were the Gantois, or citizens of Ghent,[52] who not only came in great numbers to march in the procession, but were also honored by having some of their number selected for the duty of carrying the *fierte* of Notre Dame. Moreover, they supplied, each year, richly-embroidered covers for the shrine and its litter, as well as a lavish new garment for the statue of the Virgin.[53] In addition, they dressed in uniform costume, and carried a personification on a standard, symbolizing their community, and flags and banners—some of which seem also to have been renewed each year. As with most of the processional groups, the origin of their participation is unclear, but Ghent was part of Tournai Diocese until 1559, and their tributary relationship continued even after the diocesan separation. Thousands of pilgrims from Ghent are reported to have traveled to Tournai each year for the event.[54] Groups from other regional cities and monastic communities were reported as participants in various years.[55]

The thirteenth century was a period of particularly vital energy for both the cathedral and the Grand Procession, when the Gothic renovation of the choir was undertaken, and the shrines of the Virgin and of Eleutherius were created. The burgeoning population required a new ring of city walls, a number of new parish churches, and the refurbishment of several older ones. From these establishments, parishioners formed groups to participate in procession.[56] It was also an era of emergent civic identity symbolized by the commune's new bell tower,

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(Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996), p. 53 and Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992), p. 16.

[52] Once part of the Diocese of Tournais, even an archdeanery.

[53] Cauchie, pp. 25–26. Others deal with this phenomenon as well, including Dumoulin, (1971), p. 100.

[54] Jean Dumoulin, *Trésors Sacrés* (Tournai: Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Tournai, 1971), p. 19; Wibaut, p. 16.

[55] Cauchie, p. 40. Examples include the 1626 account of the cortege, including the châsses of Saint Amand, from the abbey with his name, and of Saint Piat, from Séclin.

[56] According to Rolland (1956), p. 81, Saint Jacques was rebuilt in 1225, in 1252, there was a new church at Ste. Marie Madeleine, in 1261 a new church at Ste. Catherine, and a renovation of St. Piat, in 1269 a new church at St. Niçaise, and in 1288, a new church at Ste. Marguerite. Hocquet, *Houtart, Ravez, de Moriamé*, p. 324, cites some of these, as well, but little is reported of their appearances or customs, with regard to symbols, garments, images, or reliquaries.

and with a concomitant increase of participation in the procession of groups of professional and secular identity. During this time, the great crowds tragically resulted in numerous deaths. In 1229, thirty-one people were crushed as they tried to move through the Saint Martin gate, and another pilgrim perished in the same manner two years later. A similar mishap resulted in the death of 26 people in 1277, at the Chapel Val d'Orcq.[57]

The many shrines and statues were carried by specific groups within the processional ranks. Citizens from other places in the diocese often brought their own patrons along, in the form of reliquaries or statues, while certain of the cathedral works were assigned to specific privileged groups, such as the older Marian shrine which was processed by the group from Ghent, as noted. The privilege of carrying the Eleutherian shrine is today given to the Blandains, citizens of the village where the bishop was born and reared, and where he was long interred.[58]

Perhaps the group about which the most is known is the Damoiseaux, founded in 1280 as a pious confraternity dedicated to the Blessed Virgin. It was an aristocratic political syndicate which supported the nobility, and preference for admission to its ranks was given to descendants of members. Not surprisingly, with this basis, participation and influence dwindled over time, so their ranks had to be supplemented from other segments of the population, and eventually it became a bourgeois organization.[59] From the time of the group's institution, the *fierte* of the Damoiseaux was one of the main ornaments in the procession, with the current reliquary, as noted, created in 1571. Until 1503, their wooden châsse was dressed in a rich and beautiful cover, renewed each year. From then until 1571, they decorated the wooden reliquary box with silver sculptural imagery. In addition, they took care to complement the visual effect of the shrine decoration with lavish embroidered banners, and vestments worn by the 60 members of

[57] Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992) , pp. 18–19. These are reported in Henri Lemaître (ed.), *Chronique et annales de Gilles le Muisit, Abbé de saint-Martin de Tournai* (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1906), p. 67.

[58] Cathédrale Notre-Dame, Tournai, p. 11. This has been the practice since 1931, when the feast of the fourteenth centennial of Bishop-Saint Eleutherius was celebrated. Previously, since at least the nineteenth century, there were only four Blandains among the eight or ten porters of the shrine, referred to as the "quatre Blandinois de tradition." The prior customs are unclear. While there does not appear to have been a special cover for châsse or bier, the festive uniform garb of the group is again in evidence.

[59] Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992), p. 33.

the confraternity, and which were renewed every ten years, and with other decorations, some created with fresh flowers.[60] In their early years, the garb was of red and silver-gilt cloth, and these colors were reserved for their exclusive use.[61] During the class wars of the fifteenth century, the confraternity of the Damoiseaux was suppressed, and, in the late 1420s, their châsse was carried in the procession by commoners dressed in various colors. In 1431, the Damoiseaux resumed their old traditions with new customary dress,[62] the colors now included blue and silver robes with black hats.

Additional effects of class struggle were seen in the 1424 procession, where the deacons carried the torches of the tradesmen.[63] The distinctions among the trade guilds, identifiable by dress and paraphernalia had become part of the visual effect, as had the clerical garb, for members of the cathedral chapter and the regular clergy. Other groups were similarly associated with recognizable equipage, peculiar to their corps. The religious orders had their habits, of course, while members of diverse parishes wore particular robes, and civil authorities and functionaries, including the various magistrates, jurists, council members, mayors, bailiffs, etc., were known for their "brilliant costumes."[64]

A distinctive element which was introduced into the event in the early centuries was the presence of the military companies, later called *serments*.[65] By 1188, a city charter obliged the commune to aid the royal military campaigns and the bourgeois companies, which were organized by the types of arms they bore, with each company having its own patron saint, and specific order and ranks for ceremonial appearances. The swordsmen marched with Saint Michael as their protector; the archers, Saint Sebastian; and the crossbowmen, Saint George; while, beginning in 1381 (after the invention of firearms), a fourth company was added, the cannoniers and musketmen, with Saint Anthony as their patron.[66] The uniformed men-at-arms also carried *flambeaux*.[67]

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[60] Cauchie, pp. 30–31.
[61] Rolland, (1956), p. 91.
[62] Rolland, (1956), pp. 152–53.
[63] Rolland, (1956), p. 152.
[64] Cauchie, p. 36. For a chart of the groups, their charge in the procession, their costumes, and other details, see *http://users.belgacom.net/Grande_Procession_Tournai/participer_groupes_procession.html*.
[65] Rolland, (1956), p. 73.
[66] Rolland, (1956), p. 73. The flambeaux were replaced in 1619 with white axes, for an unknown reason.
[67] Cauchie, pp. 34–35. Cauchie notes some further subdivisions of the arms companies in later years.

The Tournaisian *Confrèrie de la Fabrique*, founded in 1361, comprised of cathedral canons or clergymen, was obligated to help with the preparations for the annual event as part of their duties to care for all of the needs of the cathedral. According to a fifteenth-century book of directives, the *Livre de la Fabrique*, they were granted indulgences for their various duties. One of them was charged each year with the duty of preaching the virtues of proper participation in the procession to the faithful, and with seeing to the adherence to the customary rubrics in the planning and organization of the affair. According to the guidelines, they were to advise against excesses and to emphasize the potential spiritual fruits as pardon, grace, and the promise of glory.[68]

There was difficulty in sustaining an atmosphere recalling the intensity of the initial petition, or even the fervent sense of thanksgiving which characterized the processions of the early years. There were times when the celebration was more lighthearted than solemn, especially with the associated events such as markets, fairs, banquets, or jousts. There were sporadic attempts to recreate the sense of sanctity of the occasion, and there were times when the social or political climate dictated that the sense of festivity be curtailed—notably, during times of war. One of the most remarkable bits of evidence for intermittent asceticism came with the appearance of the flagellants in the mid-fourteenth century. (fig. 17.9) Characterized as a fanatic reaction against generalized public depravity, especially indecency of dress and public immorality,[69] the movement expressed a penchant for self-mortification and corporeal self-punishment, with a pointedly public and visual demonstration, meant to counter perceived evils and to incite widespread participation—a fitting component of the Grand Procession.

Flagellants came to Tournai in 1349, several weeks before the procession, after having attracted participants from Bruges and elsewhere in the region. They wore a type of sleeveless camisole, slit on either side for access of their metal-pointed scourges to their skin, and their heads were covered with cowls and hats. Crosses adorned the hats and the fronts and backs of their camisoles. Each carried the penitent's baton and walked barefoot. Entering the city in ranks, they were

[68] Jean Dumoulin, *La Cathédrale de Tournai, visitor's guidebook* (Tournai: Casterman, 1959, repr. 1994), pp. 56–57.
[69] Rolland, (1956), p. 129.

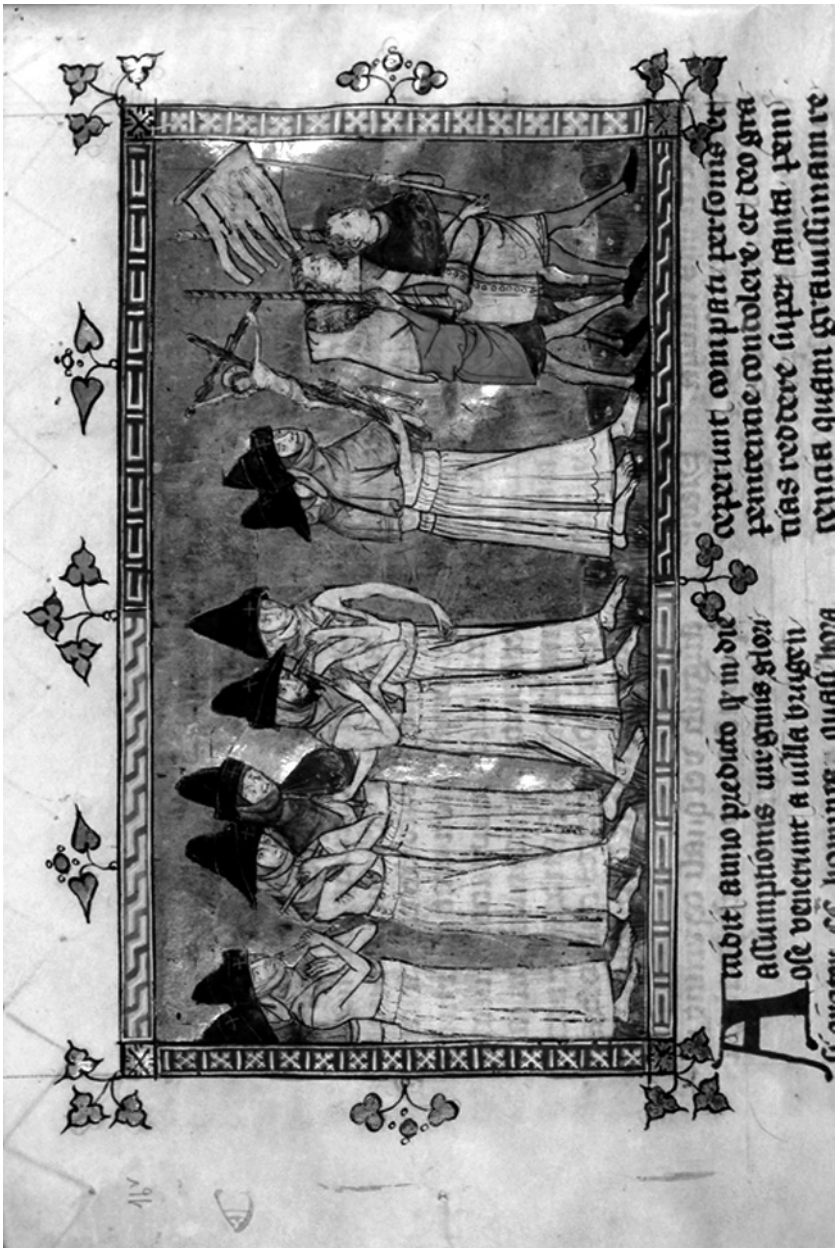

Fig. 17.9 "Flagellants" illustration from the 1349 *Chronicle of Gilles li Muisis* (Bibl. Royale Albert I. Brussels).

led by crucifer, banner, and candlebearers, and they each chanted in their own language. They proceeded to the cathedral, to the image of the Virgin, where they exposed their upper bodies, and, forming a circle, scourged themselves, while pleading for divine mercy. Each also thrice prostrated himself, lying in cruciform posture on the ground. Then kneeling and chanting, they again lashed themselves with their whips. The leader then gave a sermon, and led a prayer for the entire community. They left the church in ranks, bleeding, and chanting to the Virgin.[70] These activities continued throughout their stay, and by the time of the Grand Procession, they had greatly stimulated devotion among the locals, drawing many to join them, or to follow their pilgrimages to nearby Mont de la Trinité. It is reported that, during their thirty-three day sojourn in Tournai, almost all of the Tournaisians were in attendance at one point or another, with as many as 10,000 making the pilgrimage to Mont de la Trinité on Sundays or feasts.[71] When the flagellants left Tournai, some of the citizens joined them, as they traveled on to Ghent, l'Écluse, Dordrèche, Liège, and elsewhere.

According to the contemporary chronicle of Abbot of Saint Martin Gillis li Muisis, (d.1352), viewing these demonstrations lent a great sense of tranquility and devotion to the people of the commune, and he reported that a group of more than 250 local men soon formed a similar penitential group that promenaded around the city for nine days, barefoot, bare-chested, in cowls, and with whips. In the Grand Procession, their unit, processing without cross, banners, or candles, followed the Damoiseaux in the cortege, while their leader had to restrain them from too much bloodletting.[72] Some reported visions of an angel, who advised them that their display of penitence had earned them absolution from their sins.[73] While some praised the salutary spiritual effects of these practices, they were characterized by others as another form of excess.[74] At any rate, there seems to be little question of their strong visual impact.

This extreme of penitential character, in the face of the plague, was not seen every year, by any means. Current circumstances in any era,

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[70] Rolland, (1956), pp. 129–30.
[71] Rolland, (1956), p. 130.
[72] Lemaître, pp. 227–28; Cauchie, p. 32.
[73] Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992), p. 33; Also reported in Jean Cousin (1619), II, p. 93.
[74] Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992), p. 32.

would change the tenor of the proceedings, and its personality, like the community that sponsors it, has seen continual evolution. The overall constitution of the Grand Procession, and consequently, the visual effect, has changed in many ways, over the centuries, and it has seen periods of growth and periods of relative disinterest. The support of the civic community has fluctuated, as well, but apparently it has taken place annually, at least since 1092.[75]

The Façade Reliefs

One important visual record of the practice of procession in Tournai is the frieze of eleven reliefs at mid level on the north side of the west façade of the cathedral.[76] This prominent placement of the sculptural record underscores the significance of the rites. It has the appearance of a large retable, now sheltered by the later rib-vaulted porch.[77] There have been diverse proposals made as to the subject matter—the 1064 translation of Eleutherius' relics from Blandain to Tournai, the first Grand Procession in Tournai in 1092, the celebratory procession marking the entry of Bishop Anselm—first Tournai bishop after the 1146 separation from Noyon Diocese, the quest with the relics of Saint Piat from Séclin to Tournai in 1457, which was met and welcomed to the city by clergy with the Eleutherian reliquary—it could be either a

[75] Cathédrale Notre-Dame, Tournai, pp. 16–19. Since 1925, the current procession has been organized to include three distinct groups of images and/or cult objects. The first comes from the cathedral, the second from the city parishes, and the third from diocesan cities outside of the city of Tournai. There are many and diverse cults of the Virgin represented as patroness of groups and parishes who carry her image in statuary or on banners, as well as a variety of reliquaries and images of other saints, from French Flanders, Hainault, Brabant, and elsewhere.

[76] See Duoulin and Pycke, pp. 62–64.

[77] Schwartzbaum (1977), Appendix II. She also maintains that the sculptural reliefs were created in 1300 and restored in a much later style, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, after they were viciously damaged by the Protestants in 1566. Nathalie Vermaut, "La grande procession sur les sculptures du porche," in Dumoulin and Pycke (1992), pp. 61–62, apparently unaware of Schwartzbaum's study, proposes a variety of possible dates, ranging from 1400 (based on stylistic and iconographic similarities to *Les Tres Riches Heures du Duc de Berry*) to *c.* 1600 (based on "romanizing, antiquizing" approach to garments and heads), while seeing differences among various panels. None of this dating seems well-founded or convincing, as Anne Morganstern noted, in our conversation on the matter on April 29, 1999. Clearly, these reliefs have been insufficiently studied and may only be ascribed to an uncertain date between 1300–1600, with further uncertainties regarding their state of restoration.

generalized or specific depiction of the annual Grand Procession,[78] or perhaps a sort of encapsulating portrayal of the community as one which frequently and habitually expresses itself through the act of procession.

[78] Nathalie Vermaut, "La grande procession sur les sculptures du porche," in *La Grande Procession de Tournai (1092–1992) une realite religieuse, urbaine, diocesane, sociale, economique et artistique*, eds. J. Dumoulin, and Jacques Pycke (Tournai: Fabrique de l'Église Cathédrale de Tournai., 1992), pp. 61–62. Vermaut concludes that they do represent the Grand Procession, although a specific event is not certainly shown. Her notation of the emblem with a rampant lion which is sculpted on the vertical division between the two panels in which the châsses are depicted supports her perception of a link with the symbol for the city of Ghent as recognizable indication of their participation in the Grand Procession. The very presence of the two shrines also supports this conclusion, as does the fact that the second shrine is provided with a cover, as was known to be the case for the Marian shrine which was carried by the Gantois. Assuming this is a depiction of the Grand Procession, there is also other confirming information here related to the visual effects of the ritual. There are eleven panels here, and, reading from left to right, from front to back of the procession, we can glean some details about the cortege, which proceeds in ranks, two by two, following an ecclesiastic leader, perhaps a lay canon, since his robes do not appear to be vestments. He carries a standard, on which a banner was perhaps mounted, and is followed by two similar figures, in the first panel. Next is a group of smaller figures, clad like choirboys, the first a cross-bearer, the next two candle-bearers: the rest with books. The next three groups—all adult, except for one apparent child—also have books, except the first in the fifth panel who carries what seems to be a standard with a banner. All these figures with open books likely represent chanters. They all wear ecclesiastical garb. The next panel includes four more figures, clothed in vestments with hooded pluvials, who carry books as well, but they carry them closed and upright, presentation style, indicating that they are the Gospel books, which we know were featured prominently in this rite. The seventh panel includes six figures (two now headless), who are similarly clad, except that three wear their cowls over their heads. While Vermaut identifies these as the communal magistrates with their batons, neither what she sees nor her rationale are apparent to me. The last of them, Vermaut conjectures, may have carried the Holy Cross reliquary, since his hands are veiled. Next are the two panels with the châsses, which are borne on litters on the shoulders of men dressed in flowing robes, which do not look like ecclesiastical vestments to me. They are perhaps whatever form of uniform garb was worn by the groups who were shrine-bearers at the time, but there does not seem to be the distinction between them which I would expect, believing that the Gantois had the distinctive red and silver costumes, and, presumably, an equally particular dress for those honored to carry the Eleutherian shrine. But if the sculptures were originally painted, the peculiarities may have been designated by color. Following the shrines, in the last two panels, are laypeople, according to Vermaut, simply followers of the cortege, including very richly dressed males and females, whose capes are embroidered with fleur-de-lis, heraldic trefoils, and other ornaments, carrying books with fine bindings. She relates the borders of their garments those illustrated in the *Tres Riches Heures*, cut "en écrevisse." There is less of a sense of uniformity of dress here, and also less sense of ceremony in their posture. If all of this description is accurate, then the grouping of the processing units is consonant with the usual rubrics.

As Ashley notes, the most important, most honored positions in such a march are at the end of the cortege.[79] In this sculptural depiction, the Marian Shrine is found in that spot, with Eleutherius immediately preceding. This calls into question the placement of the Holy Cross Reliquary, if it indeed precedes the shrines here, in this condensed set of notations about the pageant. The leading position in the procession, generally taken by the crucifer, is perhaps echoed by the bearer of the Cross Reliquary, as leader of the shrines. At any rate, the depiction necessarily abbreviates the cortege.

Whatever processional event these sculptures represent, they furnish valuable information. They confirm the importance of the processional rite in this community, with the inclusion of their reliquaries from the cathedral. We also glean some sense of the participants, the order, the accoutrements, and the solemn, rhythmic movement. They indicate that the custom was well-established, and was a significant local expression, similar to the recurring sacred cultic rites of antiquity which are commemorated on the Parthenon frieze and the Ara Pacis in Rome.

The Reliquary Procession's Meaning for the Community & Its Afterlife in Tournai

While year-by-year account of the processional event is out of the question, the perusal of various years further documents its ongoing and annual character and lends insight into certain aspects of the history of the procession and of the history of Tournai—urban growth and change, internal and external relationships, civic, religious, and social implications, and artistic collaboration.

Associated with the Grand Procession in the medieval era were the annual fairs which were, at Tournai, as elsewhere, originally religious in nature, even before the advent of the annual procession, and the two events became closely linked. The first annual commemoration in 1093 was linked to what was already an occasion of fair and feast,

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[79] Kathleen Ashley and Pamela Sheingorn. "Discordia et lis: Negotiating Power, Property, and Performance in Medieval Sélestat," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 26/3 (Fall, 1996), pp. 419–46. Kathy Ashley and I have discussed this issue in some more depth, as well, particularly with regard to the order of the rest, as I have discussed above.

the May period in which Tournaisians observed the anniversary of the cathedral dedication—May 9—which was also generally the season of Ascension and Pentecost, thus linked to the annual episcopal offering period.[80] The fair time was one of safe-conduct, the temporary re-opening of the city to the banished, and the temporary exemption of debtors—an overall season of greater liberality.[81] As the population increased across the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the fairs became increasingly commercial and secular, and an increasingly inappropriate adjunct to the procession.

At the same time, the population increased, both within the community, and in the diocesan area, from which pilgrims traveled for the feasts. It was during this era that the separate diocese of Tournai was granted its independence, in 1146.[82] Consequently there was apparently greater potential to support a separate season for the procession. Ironically, at least in spiritual terms, there soon began a second great annual fair, with a *kermesse*, in September, at the time to which the procession had been shifted.[83] Although this was only officially decreed in 1284, by Philip the Bold, the decree seems to have only confirmed what had become common practice.

The event took place each year, although accommodations were made under certain conditions. The hostilities in the Low Countries in the fourteenth century were particularly sharp between Tournai and Flanders, especially in 1338–40. Noteworthy is the fervor of the Gantois in their cult of the Virgin at Tournai, who, despite their participation in the Flemish siege of Tournai, fulfilled their annual duties to supply the garments for her statue and the cover for her shrine. In 1338 they marched in the procession; in 1339, they deputed priests to march in their stead; and in 1340, they sent four Dominicans, with the gifts, to take their place. Only in 1477, with the troubles associated with the ascent to power of Mary of Burgundy, did the faithful of Ghent abstain

[80] Clearly, the coordination of the fixed dedication anniversary with the annual movable feasts would have been more synchronous in some years than others.

[81] Rolland, (1956), pp. 86–87. See also Dumoulin and Pycke, (1992), p. 19; Cauchie includes, in his Annexes a number of documents which deal with the issue of safe-conduct, beginning with #9, from 1330: Philippe VI. *Roi de France accorde la franchise de corps et de biens aux étrangers durant les neuf jours de la procession*.

[82] Rolland, (1956), p. 59. The number of villages in the diocese increased to twelve by the mid-twelfth century, and the number of churches doubled in only one generation at the same period.

[83] Cauchie, p. 15.

altogether from upholding their duties of support and participation, which were resumed the following year, although in smaller measure.[84] In 1521, Tournai reconciled with the Low Countries under Charles V, but this ruler failed to present the richly-decorated, ermine-bordered mantle for Mary's statue, as had been the custom of the Counts of Flanders, for use in the procession. By 1525, the chapter of canons appealed to him to resume the former custom, citing the antiquity of the courtesy, receiving a favorable response and the renewal of the tradition; in 1528 a messenger was sent from Ghent, to bring the cape.[85] This emphasizes the importance of the accrued body of practice in the observance of the event,[86] and the pull of tradition in such political negotiations. They were able to push the ruler into seeing the custom as an expedient sort of obligation.

Other reports deal with the itinerary and modifications to the procession for certain years, as well as certain points of order and rank, but no documents survive on the overall order, or on the position of the main châsses within the cortege, other than what can be gathered from the depiction in the façade reliefs, as noted. There were distinguished guests, even the French King, noted in some years.[87] Artists and artisans of every type[88] worked in Tournai throughout the procession's history, and it provided outlet for them, both in creating

[84] Cauchie, pp. 26–29.

[85] Cauchie, pp. 29–30.

[86] Rolland, (1956), pp. 115–16. It is also worthy of note that the procession was held every year, even through the duration of the Hundred Years War. According to Cauchie (Annex 11, of 1392, ff. and Annex 71, p. 89) there are, nonetheless, repeated instances among the documents of attempts to curtail the expenses, especially those which were incumbent upon the civil authorities, such as the provisions of wine customarily given to the members of confraternities, guilds, and serments, In other instances, there are accounts which simply document the allotment or outlay of expenditures for these items, as well as for necessary supplies, preparations and clean-up operations, and for hiring personnel and rewarding functionaries. They also refer to pious and spiritual duties, encouraging the citizens to attend the event with all devotion, and prayers to God. They exhort the giving of "alms and suffrages of piety," as well as the inclusion, beginning in 1626, of a processional unit comprised of the orphans and foundlings who were sustained at the expense of the city.

[87] Rolland, (1956), pp. 89–90. Such as civic authorities from other cities, and the visiting shrines of Saint Amand, Saint Piat, and Saint Steven, in 1626, as well the addition of certain new types of participating groups over time. In 1315, King Louis X attended, while in 1353, it was remarked that a German doctor, Jean de Mayence, who had successfully treated Gilles li Muisis for cataracts was an observer.

[88] This included fabricators and workers in metalwork, fabric, stone, arms & armor, porcelain, pottery, painting, tapestry, embroidery, damask, bells, cannons, sculpture, musical instruments, etc.

decorations and equipment, and as they marched with their guilds. For example, one of the chief industries from the Merovingian era on, was that of the cloth-makers, and the clerics drew upon their talents for vestments and liturgical décor, as did civil and political figures for their own garb and paraphernalia. Rolland believes this trade was instrumental in making Tournai a significant center for ceremonial events, drawing many important visitors there for regional councils, diocesan synods, and the like. A second sector of commerce, in stone, was a further draw, supplying local and distant ecclesiastical establishments with monuments and buildings.[89] Perhaps of most interest to art historians is the great creative cooperation and contributions of several exceptional craftsmen. Employed in these industries, and in the processions, were such notables as André Beauneveu, who helped in the Grand Procession in 1392.[90] Rogier van der Weyden (born in Tournai in 1399) was a noted visitor to the 1441 event, where he was acknowledged as the official painter of Brussels.[91] Robert Campin, *peintre ordinaire* of the city from 1410[92] was credited as decorator of the "*châsse de la ville*"[93] (*Damoiseaux)*, creating the covering, and the banners for the group.[94] These men, along with Tournaisian Jacques Daret, and a great many other artists and goldsmiths, who belonged to the Guild of Saint Luke, marched in the annual procession under the banner of their patron saint.[95]

Other Processions at Tournai

The Grand Procession was not the only occasion for deploying the lavish works of art that were most prominently featured there. From the 1247 shrine consecration forward, Eleutherius was involved in all the fortunes and misfortunes of political and social life in Tournai. People prayed at the foot of his châsse, and bid the saint to accompany them in procession on various significant occasions, often with special cer-

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[89] Rolland, (1956), p. 40.
[90] Rolland, (1956), p. 142.
[91] Rolland, (1956), p. 165.
[92] Maurice Houtart, "La peinture et la sculpture à Tournai," *Wallonia* XXI/5–6 (1913), pp. 347–68, esp. 362.
[93] Rolland, (1956), pp. 164–65.
[94] Houtart, p. 362.
[95] Houtart, p. 361. This author cites this joint union as the reason why there was so much gold used in the paintings of Tournai artists.

emonial observances, including sounding the great bell, lighting large numbers of candles, solemn chants, etc.[96] Eventually special powers of "meteoric order," were attributed to the saint[97] so that the community adopted the custom of processions with the relics of Eleutherius for special intercession in times of trouble, such as drought, flood, etc. usually, borne by the cathedral canons.[98] Moreover, the patron was always included in every type of great political event,[99] sometimes with the other reliquaries and statues, at other times, by himself. In 1214, there was a spontaneous procession of solemn thanksgiving by the French chevaliers and the communal magistrate, followed by feasting and celebration, when Philip Augustus, with the aid of Tournais, conquered the Count of Flanders. The clocks were sounded for three days, and there were eight days of jousts, carousels, and tournaments.[100]

At the beginning of the 100 Years War, in 1340, the city magistrate of Tournai had the Eleutherian shrine carried around the city in procession. It was also brought out for the reunion in 1429 of the Council of Pisa, which offered hopes of an end to the Great Schism.[101] Also in 1429, the Tournaisians, with great enthusiasm for the saga of Jeanne d'Arc, engaged in a thanksgiving march with the châsse of Saint Eleutherius, when they learned of the coronation of Charles VII. They made the same gesture in supplication for Charles to deliver the Gascon city of Tartas from the English in June of 1442. Knowing this, Louis XI demanded the same signal of petition for his efforts to reunite the Duchy of Burgundy to the French crown, after the death of Charles le Téméraire in May of 1477.[102] Clearly, the pull of the rite was considered powerful, so the king's pushing for the ceremonial gesture accentuated the belief, hope, and expectation.

Perhaps the most poignant use of the reliquary was in times of siege by plague. In addition to the 1090 event, there were epidemics in 1349 (with 2500 victims in the city), and in 1514 (30,000–40,000 victims).

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[96] Warichez (1931), p. 64. Unfortunately a source is not listed.
[97] Warichez (1931), p. 64.
[98] Dumoulin (1971), p. 101.
[99] Warichez (1931), p. 64.
[100] Rolland (1956), pp. 117–18. Hocquet, Houtart, Ravez, de Moriamé, p. 24.
[101] Dumoulin (1971), p. 101.
[102] Joseph *Warichez, La Cathédrale de Tournai et son Chapitre* (Wetteren: De Meester, 1934), pp. 64–65.

In each of these assaults, the people were moved to travel the streets with their patron saint, pleading for relief.[103]

It is clear that the atmosphere in Tournai was and is, conducive to processional rites, encouraging the citizens, and their neighbors, to employ this communal activity as a means of pious and festive Christian communal expression. They were found to serve many purposes, to respond to diverse needs, and to create an outlet for many aspects of life in the city—spiritual, social, cultural, political—while creating significant opportunities for artistic endeavor, as well.

[103] Warichez (1931), p. 66; in pp. 18–20, he discusses the other saints who were honored. Among the many other cults significant at Tournai were those of Saints Michael, Barbara, Catherine, Eloi, and Piat, who was honored by inclusion of his relics in the Damoiseaux châsse, and his depiction in the choir windows, where thirty-six medallions are dedicated to him and by his occasional participation in the Grand Procession, discussed above. Saint Eloi, long associated with the evangelization of the area, was widely honored as patron of other churches in the diocese. Piat's relics were carried in procession to Tournai, notably on two occasions, with great pomp. In the 1457 quest to raise funds for a new châsse, they were ceremoniously met by the shrine of Eleutherius. In 1626 they were brought to Tournai, to process through the city in petition for succor from a tenacious epidemic which afflicted Séclin, Another agent of early evangelization in the area, St. Chrysole, is also an object of veneration here, with eight medallions of the choir windows, while most of his relics are at Bruges, in a shrine created in 1559, which also contains a relic of Eleutherius. As one of the "First Apostles of Flanders," and along with Piat and Eleutherius, (all revered as martyrs), his cult in Tournai is strong there, and it is noted that Bruges was also once part of the Diocese of Tournai. Piat was reputed to have baptized 30,000 people and to have built a stone building at Tournai, which induced some to call him the first bishop there, but as there was no seat there, nor even a fixed diocesan territory, Warichez concludes that he may have been a choreveque. The myriad cults reflect the complexity of the rich devotional tenor.

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